A large, detailed illustration of an elephant's head and trunk, facing right. The trunk is long and curved, extending towards the bottom right of the cover. The elephant's head is on the left side, with its eye and ear visible.

# STRUGGLES & TRIUMPHS OF RECOLLECTIONS OF P.T. BARNUM

ILLUSTRATED

WRITTEN  
BY HIMSELF.



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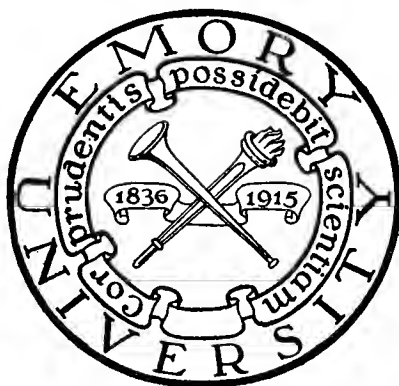
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STRUGGLES AND TRIUMPHS;

OR, THE

RECOLLECTIONS OF P, T BARNUM.



LONDON:  
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*P. T. Barnum*



STRUGGLES AND TRIUMPHS ;

OR,

*The Recollections*

OF

P. T. BARNUM.

*WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.*

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## *CONTENTS.*

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CHAP	PAGE
I. EARLY LIFE . . . . .	I
II. INCIDENTS AND ANECDOTES . . . . .	11
III. IN BUSINESS FOR MYSELF . . . . .	22
IV. STRUGGLES FOR A LIVELIHOOD . . . . .	30
V. MY START AS A SHOWMAN . . . . .	38
VI. MY FIRST TRAVELLING COMPANY . . . . .	47
VII. AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER . . . . .	55
VIII. THE AMERICAN MUSEUM . . . . .	63
IX. THE ROAD TO RICHES . . . . .	73
X. ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SPECULATION . . . . .	85
XI. GENERAL TOM THUMB IN ENGLAND . . . . .	91
XII. IN FRANCE . . . . .	101
XIII. IN BELGIUM . . . . .	107
XIV. IN ENGLAND AGAIN . . . . .	114
XV. RETURN TO AMERICA . . . . .	122
XVI. THE JENNY LIND ENTERPRISE . . . . .	131
XVII. SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT . . . . .	139
XVIII. INCIDENTS OF THE TOUR . . . . .	146
XIX. JENNY LIND . . . . .	155
XX. CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN . . . . .	160
XXI. OTHER ENTERPRISES . . . . .	165
XXII. WORK AND PLAY . . . . .	174
XXIII. THE JEROME CLOCK COMPANY ENTANGLEMENT . . . . .	178
XXIV. CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE . . . . .	186
XXV. ABROAD AGAIN . . . . .	196
XXVI. THE ART OF MONEY-GETTING . . . . .	210



CHAP.	PAGE
XXVII. RICHARD'S HIMSELF AGAIN . . . . .	233
XXVIII. MORE ABOUT THE MUSEUM . . . . .	246
XXIX. MR. AND MRS. GENERAL TOM THUMB . . . . .	255
XXX. POLITICAL AND PERSONAL . . . . .	272
XXXI. CURIOUS COINCIDENCES—NUMBER THIRTEEN . . . . .	291
XXXII. SEASIDE PARK AND WALDEMERE . . . . .	299
XXXIII. REST ONLY FOUND IN ACTION . . . . .	305
XXXIV. AMONG MY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS . . . . .	314
XXXV. HIPPODROMICAL, HYMENEAL, AND MUNICIPAL . . . . .	323
XXXVI. FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC . . . . .	328
XXXVII. THE GREAT ALLIANCE—JUMBO . . . . .	340
POSTSCRIPT . . . . .	366





# STRUGGLES AND TRIUMPHS,

OR, THE

RECOLLECTIONS OF P. T. BARNUM.

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## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY LIFE.

I WAS born in the town of Bethel, in the State of Connecticut, July 5, 1810. My name, Phineas Taylor, is derived from my maternal grandfather, who was a great wag in his way, and who, as I was his first grandchild, handed over to his daughter Irena, my mother, at my christening, a gift deed, in my behalf, of five acres of land, called "Ivy Island," situated in that part of the parish of Bethel known as the "Plum Trees."

My father, Philo Barnum, was a tailor, a farmer, and sometimes a tavern-keeper, and my advantages and disadvantages were such as fall to the general run of farmer's boys. I drove cows to and from the pasture, shelled corn, weeded the garden; as I grew larger I rode horse for ploughing, turned and raked hay; in due time I handled the shovel and the hoe, and when I could do so I went to school.

I was six years old when I began to go to school, and the first date I remember inscribing upon my writing-book was 1818. The ferule, in those days, was the assistant school-master. I was a willing, and, I think, a pretty apt scholar. In arithmetic I was unusually ready and accurate, and I remember, at the age of ten years, being called out of bed one night by my teacher, who had wagered with a neighbour that I could calculate the correct number of feet in a load of wood



in five minutes. The dimensions given, I figured out the result in less than two minutes, to the great delight of my teacher and to the equal astonishment of his neighbour.

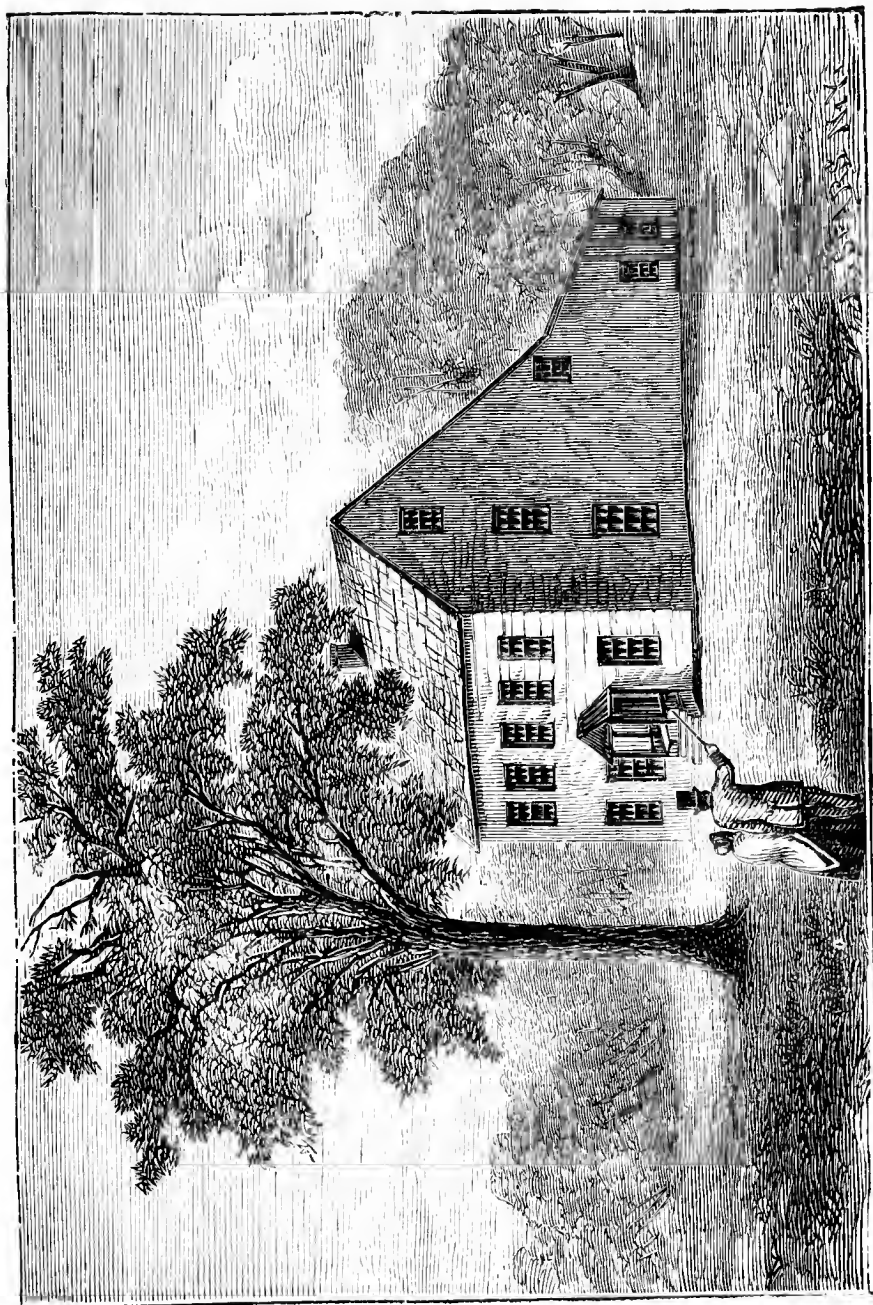
My organ of "acquisitiveness" was manifest at an early age. Before I was five years of age I began to accumulate pennies and "fourpencees," and when I was six years old my capital amounted to a sum sufficient to exchange for a silver dollar, the possession of which made me feel far richer than I have ever since felt in the world.

Nor did my dollar long remain alone. As I grew older I earned ten cents a day, for riding the horse which led the ox-team in ploughing, and on holidays and "training days," instead of spending money I earned it. I was a small peddler of molasses candy (of home make), ginger-bread, cookies and cherry rum, and I generally found myself a dollar or two richer at the end of a holiday than I was at the beginning. By the time I was twelve years old, besides other property, I was the owner of a sheep and a calf, and should soon, no doubt, have become a small Cræsus, had not my father kindly permitted me to purchase my own clothing, which somewhat reduced my little store.

I think it was in 1820, when I was ten years of age, I made my first expedition to my landed property, "Ivy Island." From the time when I was four years old I was continually hearing of this "property." My grandfather always spoke of me (in my presence) to the neighbours and to strangers as the richest child in town, since I owned the whole of "Ivy Island," one of the most valuable farms in the State. My father and mother frequently reminded me of my wealth and hoped I would do something for the family when I attained my majority. The neighbours professed to fear that I might refuse to play with their children because I had inherited so large a property.

These constant allusions, for several years, to "Ivy Island," excited at once my pride and my curiosity, and stimulated me to implore my father's permission to visit my property. At last he promised I should do so in a few days, as we should be getting some hay near "Ivy Island." The wished-for day arrived, and my father told me that as we were to now





MY BIRTHPLACE.



an adjoining meadow, I might visit my property in company with the hired man during the "nooning." My grandfather reminded me that it was to his bounty I was indebted for this wealth, and that had not my name been Phineas I might never have been proprietor of "Ivy Island." To this my mother added :

"Now, Taylor, don't become so excited when you see your property as to let your joy make you sick, for remember, rich as you are, that it will be eleven years before you can come into possession of your fortune."

She added much more good advice, to all of which I promised to be calm and reasonable, and not to allow my pride to prevent me from speaking to my brothers and sisters when I returned home.

When we arrived at the meadow, which was in that part of the "Plum Trees" known as "East Swamp," I asked my father where "Ivy Island" was.

"Yonder, at the north end of this meadow, where you see those beautiful trees rising in the distance."

All the forenoon I turned grass as fast as two men could cut it, and after a hasty repast at noon, one of our hired men, a good-natured Irishman, named Edmund, took an axe on his shoulder and announced that he was ready to accompany me to "Ivy Island." We started, and as we approached the north end of the meadow we found the ground swampy and wet, and were soon obliged to leap from bog to bog on our route. A mis-step brought me up to my middle in water, and to add to the dilemma a swarm of hornets attacked me. Attaining the altitude of another bog I was cheered by the assurance that there was only a quarter of a mile of this kind of travel to the edge of my property. I waded on. In about fifteen minutes more, after floundering through the morass, I found myself half-drowned, hornet-stung, mud-covered, and out of breath, on comparatively dry land.

"Never mind, my boy," said Edmund. "We have only to cross this little creek, and you'll be upon your own valuable property."

We were on the margin of a stream, the banks of which were thickly covered with alders. I now discovered the use of



Edmund's axe, for he felled a small oak to form a temporary bridge to my "Island" property. Crossing over, I proceeded to the centre of my domain. I saw nothing but a few stunted ivies and straggling trees. The truth flashed upon me. I had been the laughing-stock of the family and neighbourhood for years. My valuable "Ivy Island" was an almost inaccessible, worthless bit of barren land, and while I stood deploring my sudden downfall, a huge black snake (one of my tenants) approached me with upraised head. I gave one shriek and rushed for the bridge.

This was my first and last visit to "Ivy Island." My father asked me "how I liked my property?" and I responded that I would sell it pretty cheap.

When I was nearly twelve years old I made my first visit to the metropolis. It happened in this wise: Late one afternoon in January, 1822, Mr Daniel Brown, of Southbury, Connecticut, arrived at my father's tavern, in Bethel, with some fat cattle he was driving to New York to sell, and put up for the night. After supper, hearing Mr. Brown say to my father that he intended to buy more cattle, and that he would be glad to hire a boy to assist in driving them, I immediately besought my father to secure the situation for me, and he did so. My mother's consent was gained, and at daylight next morning, I started on foot, in the midst of a heavy snowstorm, to help drive the cattle. Before reaching Ridgefield, I was sent on horseback after a stray ox, and in galloping, the horse fell and my ankle was sprained. I suffered severely, but did not complain, lest my employer should send me back. We arrived at New York in three or four days, and put up at the Bull's Head Tavern, where we were to stay a week while the drover disposed of his cattle. It was an eventful week for me. Before I left home, my mother had given me a dollar, which I supposed would supply every want that heart could wish. My first outlay was for oranges, which I was told were four pence apiece, and as "four pence" in Connecticut was six cents, I offered ten cents for two oranges, which was of course readily taken; and thus, instead of saving two cents, as I thought, I actually paid two cents more than the price demanded. I then bought two more oranges, reducing my capital to eighty cents.



Thirty-one cents was the "charge" for a small gun, which would "go off" and send a stick some little distance, and this gun I bought. Amusing myself with this toy in the bar-room of the Bull's Head, the arrow happened to hit the bar-keeper, who forthwith came from behind the counter and shook me, and soundly boxed my ears, telling me to put that gun out of the way or he would put it into the fire. I sneaked to my room, put my treasure under the pillow, and went out for another visit to the toy-shop.

There I invested six cents in "torpedoes," with which I intended to astonish my school-mates in Bethel. I could not refrain, however, from experimenting upon the guests of the hotel, which I did when they were going to dinner. I threw two or three torpedoes against the wall of the hall through which the guests were passing, and the immediate results were as follows: two loud reports—astonished guests—irate landlord—discovery of the culprit, and summary punishment, for the landlord immediately floored me with a single blow with his open hand, and said:

"There, you little greenhorn, see if that will teach you better than to explode your infernal fire-crackers in my house again."

The lesson was sufficient, if not entirely satisfactory. I deposited the balance of the torpedoes with my gun, and as a solace for my wounded feelings I again visited the toy-shop, where I bought a watch, breastpin and top, leaving but eleven cents of my original dollar.

The following morning found me again at the fascinating toy-shop, where I saw a beautiful knife with two blades, gimlet, and a corkscrew—a whole carpenter shop in miniature, and all for thirty-one cents. But alas! I had only eleven cents. Have that knife I must, however, and so I proposed to the shop-woman to take back the top and breastpin at a slight deduction, and with my eleven cents to let me have the knife. The kind creature consented, and this makes memorable my first "swap." Some fine and nearly white molasses candy then caught my eye, and I proposed to trade the watch for its equivalent in candy. The transaction was made and the candy was so delicious that before night my gun was absorbed in the same way. The next morning the torpedoes "went off"





MY PROPERTY AND MY TENANT.



in the same direction, and before night even my beloved knife was similarly exchanged. My money and my goods all gone, I traded two pocket-handkerchiefs, and an extra pair of stockings I was sure I would not want, for nine more rolls of molasses candy, and then wandered about the city disconsolate, sighing because there was no more molasses candy to conquer.

I doubt not that, in these first wanderings about the city, I often passed the corner of Broadway and Ann Street—never dreaming of the stir I was destined at a future day to make in that locality as proprietor and manager of the American Museum.

After wandering, gazing and wondering for a week, Mr. Brown took me in his sleigh, and on the evening of the following day we arrived in Bethel. I had a thousand questions to answer, and for a long time I was quite a lion among my mates because I had seen the great metropolis. My brothers and sisters, however, were much disappointed at my not bringing them something from my dollar, and when my mother examined my wardrobe and found two pocket-handkerchiefs and one pair of stockings missing, she whipped me and sent me to bed. Thus ingloriously terminated my first visit to New York.

As I grew older my settled aversion to manual labour, farm or other kind, was manifest in various ways, which were set down to the general score of laziness. In despair of doing better with me, my father concluded to make a merchant of me. He erected a building in Bethel, and, with Mr. Hiram Weed as a partner, purchased a stock of dry goods, hardware, groceries and general notions, and installed me as clerk in this country store.

Like most people in Connecticut in those days, I was brought up to attend church regularly on Sunday, and long before I could read I was a prominent scholar in the Sunday School. My good mother taught me my lessons in the New Testament and the Catechism, and my every effort was directed to win one of those "Rewards of Merit," which promised to pay the bearer one mill, so that ten of those prizes amounted to one cent, and one hundred of them, which might be won by faithful assiduity every Sunday for two years, would buy a Sunday School book worth ten cents. Such were the magni-



ficient rewards held out to the religious ambition of youth in those days.

There was but one church, or "meeting-house," in Bethel, which all attended, sinking all differences of creed in the Presbyterian faith. The old meeting-house had neither steeple nor bell, and was a plain edifice, comfortable enough in summer, but my teeth chatter even now when I think of the dreary, cold, freezing hours we passed in that place in winter. A stove in a meeting-house in those days would have been a sacrilegious innovation. The sermons were from an hour and a half to two hours long, and through these the congregation would sit and shiver till they really merited the title the profane gave them of "blue skins." Some of the women carried a "foot-stove," consisting of a small square tin box in a wooden frame, the sides perforated, and in the interior there was a small square iron dish, which contained a few live coals covered with ashes. These stoves were usually replenished just before meeting-time at some neighbour's, near the meeting-house.

After many years of shivering and suffering, one of the brethren had the temerity to propose that the church should be warmed with a stove. His impious proposition was voted down by an overwhelming majority. Another year came around, and in November the stove question was again brought up. The excitement was immense. The subject was discussed in the village stores and in the juvenile debating club; it was prayed over in conference; and, finally, in general "society's meeting," in December, the stove was carried by a majority of one, and was introduced into the meeting-house. On the first Sunday thereafter, two ancient maiden ladies were so oppressed by the dry and heated atmosphere occasioned by the wicked innovation, that they fainted away and were carried out into the cool air, where they speedily returned to consciousness, especially when they were informed that owing to the lack of two lengths of pipe, no fire had yet been made in the stove. The next Sunday was a bitter cold day, and the stove, filled with well seasoned hickory, was a great gratification to the many, and displeased only a few.

During the Rev. Mr. Lowe's ministrations at Bethel, he formed a Bible class, of which I was a member. We used to



draw promiscuously from a hat a text of Scripture and write a composition on the text, which compositions were read after service in the afternoon, to such of the congregation as remained to hear the exercises of the class. Once, I remember, I drew the text, Luke x., 42: "But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." *Question*, "What is the one thing needful?" My answer was nearly as follows:

"This question, 'What is the one thing needful?' is capable of receiving various answers, depending much upon the persons to whom it is addressed. The merchant might answer that 'the one thing needful is plenty of customers, who buy liberally, without beating down, and pay cash for all their purchases.' The farmer might reply, that 'the one thing needful is large harvests and high prices.' The physician might answer that 'it is plenty of patients.' The lawyer might be of the opinion that 'it is an unruly community, always engaging in bickerings and litigations.' The clergyman might reply, 'it is a fat salary, with multitudes of sinners seeking salvation and paying large pew rents.' The bachelor might exclaim, 'it is a pretty wife who loves her husband, and who knows how to sew on buttons.' The maiden might answer, 'it is a good husband, who will love, cherish, and protect me while life shall last.' But the most proper answer, and doubtless that which applied to the case of Mary, would be, 'The one thing needful is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, follow in his footsteps, love God and obey His commandments, love our fellow-man, and embrace every opportunity of administering to his necessities.' In short, 'the one thing needful' is to live a life that we can always look back upon with satisfaction, and be enabled ever to contemplate its termination with trust in Him who has so kindly vouchsafed it to us, surrounding us with innumerable blessings, if we have but the heart and wisdom to receive them in a proper manner."

The reading of a portion of this answer occasioned some amusement in the congregation, in which the clergyman himself joined, and the name of "Taylor Barnum" was whispered in connection with the composition; but at the close of the reading I had the satisfaction of hearing Mr. Lowe say that it was a well-written answer to the question, "What is the one thing needful?"



## CHAPTER II.

### INCIDENTS AND ANECDOTES.

DANBURY and Bethel were, and still are, manufacturing villages. Hats and combs were the principal articles of manufacture. The hatters and comb-makers had occasion to go to New York every spring and fall, and they generally managed to go in parties, frequently taking in a few "outsiders," who merely wished to visit the city for the fun of the thing. They usually took passage on board a sloop at Norwalk, and the length of their passage depended entirely upon the state of the wind. Sometimes the run would be made in eight hours, and at other times nearly as many days were required. It, however, made little difference with the passengers. They were in for a "spree," and were sure to have a jolly time, whether on land or water. They were all fond of practical jokes, and before starting they usually entered into a solemn compact that any man who got angry at a practical joke should forfeit and pay the sum of twenty dollars. This agreement frequently saved much trouble, for occasionally an unexpected and rather severe trick would be played off, and sadly chafe the temper of the victim.

Upon one of these occasions a party of fourteen men started from Bethel on a Monday morning for New York. Among the number were my grandfather, Captain Noah Ferry, Benjamin Hoyt, Esq., Uncle Samuel Taylor (as he was called by everybody), Eleazer Taylor, and Charles Dart. Most of these were proverbial jokers, and it was doubly necessary to adopt the stipulation in regard to the control of temper. It was therefore done in writing, duly signed.

They arrived at Norwalk on Monday afternoon. The sloop set sail the same evening, with a fair prospect of reaching New York early the next morning. Several strangers took passage at Norwalk, among the rest a clergyman. He soon found himself in jolly company, and attempted to keep aloof.



But they informed him it was no use: they expected to reach New York the next morning, and were determined to "make a night of it," so he might as well render himself agreeable, for sleep was out of the question.

His "Reverence" remonstrated at first, and talked about "his rights," but he soon learned that he was in a company where the rights of "the majority" were in the ascendant; so he put a smooth face upon affairs, and making up his mind not to retire that night, he soon engaged in conversation with several of his fellow passengers.

The clergyman was a slim spare man, standing over six feet high in his stockings, light complexion, sandy hair, and wearing a huge pair of reddish-brown whiskers. Some of the passengers joked him upon the superfluity of hair upon his face; but he replied that nature had placed it there, and although he thought proper, in accordance with modern custom, to shave off a portion of his beard, he considered it neither unmanly nor unclerical to wear whiskers. It seemed to be conceded that the clergyman had the best of the argument, and the subject was changed.

Expectation of a speedy run to New York was most sadly disappointed. The vessel appeared scarcely to move, and through the long weary hours of day and night there was not a ripple on the surface of the water. Nevertheless, there was merriment on board the sloop, each voyager contributing good humour to beguile the tediousness of time. Friday morning came, but the calm continued. Five days from home, and no prospect of reaching New York! We may judge the appearance of the beards of the passengers. There was but one razor in the company; it was owned by my grandfather—and he refused to use it, or to suffer it to be used.

"We shall all be shaved in New York," said he.

On Saturday morning "all hands" appeared upon deck—and the sloop was becalmed opposite Sawpits! (now Port Chester). This tried the patience of the passengers sadly.

"I expected to start for home to-day," said one.

"I supposed that all my combs would have been sold at auction on Wednesday, and yet here they are on board," said another.



"I intended to have sold my hats surely this week, for I have a note to pay in New Haven on Monday," added a third.

"I have an appointment to preach in New York this evening and to-morrow," said the clergyman, whose huge sandy whiskers overshadowed a face now completely covered with a bright red beard a quarter of an inch long.

"Well, there is no use crying, gentlemen," replied the captain, "it is lucky for us that we have chickens and eggs on freight, or we might have to be put upon allowance."

After breakfast the passengers, who now began to look like barbarians, again solicited the loan of my grandfather's razor.

"No, gentlemen," he replied; "I insist that shaving is unhealthy and contrary to nature, and I am determined neither to shave myself nor to loan my razor until we reach New York."

Night came and yet no wind. Sunday morning found them in the same position. Their patience was well-nigh exhausted, but after breakfast a slight ripple appeared. It gradually increased, and the passengers were soon delighted in seeing the anchor weighed and the sails again set. The sloop glided finely through the water, and smiles of satisfaction forced themselves through the swamps of bristles which covered the faces of the passengers.

"What time shall we reach New York if this breeze continues?" was the anxious inquiry of half a dozen passengers.

"About two o'clock this afternoon," replied the good-natured captain, who now felt assured that no calm would further blight his prospects.

"Alas! that will be too late to get shaved," exclaimed several voices—"the barber shops close at twelve."

"And I shall barely be in time to preach my afternoon sermon," responded the red bearded clergyman. "Mr. Taylor, do be so kind as to loan me your shaving utensils," he continued, addressing my grandfather.

The old gentleman then went to his trunk, and unlocking it, he drew forth his razor, lather-box and strop. The passengers pressed round him, as all were now doubly anxious for a chance to shave themselves.

"Now, gentlemen," said my grandfather, "I will be fair



with you. I did not intend to lend my razor, but as we shall arrive too late for the barber's, you shall all use it. But it is evident we cannot all have time to be shaved with one razor before we reach New York, and as it would be hard for half of us to walk on shore with clean faces, and leave the rest on board waiting for their turn to shave themselves, I have hit upon a plan which I am sure you will all say is just and equitable."

"What is it?" was the anxious inquiry.

"It is that each man shall shave one half of his face, and pass the razor over to the next, and when we are all half shaved we shall go on in rotation and shave the other half."

They all agreed to this except the clergyman. He objected to appearing so ridiculous upon the Lord's Day, whereupon several declared that any man with such enormous reddish whiskers must necessarily always look ridiculous, and they insisted that if the clergyman used the razor at all he should shave off his whiskers.

My grandfather assented to this proposal, and said, "Now, gentlemen, as I own the razor I will begin, and as our reverend friend is in a hurry he shall be next—but off shall come one of his whiskers on the first turn, or he positively shall not use my razor at all."

The clergyman, seeing there was no use in parleying, reluctantly agreed to the proposition.

In the course of ten minutes one side of my grandfather's face and chin, in a straight line from the middle of the nose, was shaved as close as the back of his hand, while the other looked like a thick brush fence in a country swamp. The passengers burst into a roar of laughter, in which the clergyman irresistibly joined, and my grandfather handed the razor to the clerical gentleman.

The clergyman had already well lathered one half of his face and passed the brush to the next customer. In a short time the razor had performed its work, and the clergyman was denuded of one whisker. The left side of his face was as naked as that of an infant, while from the other cheek four inches of a huge red whisker stood out in powerful contrast. Nothing more ludicrous could well be conceived. A deafening



burst of laughter ensued, and the poor clergyman slunk quietly away to wait an hour until his turn should arrive to shave the other portion of his face.

The next man went through the same operation, and all the rest followed; a new laugh breaking forth as each customer handed over the razor to the next in turn. In the course of an hour and a quarter every passenger on board was half shaved. It was then proposed that all should go on deck and take a drink before operations were commenced on the other side of their faces. When they all gathered upon the deck the scene was most ludicrous. The whole party burst again into loud merriment, each man being convulsed by the ludicrous appearance of the other.

"Now, gentlemen," said my grandfather, "I will go into the cabin and shave off the other side. You can all remain on deck. As soon as I have finished I will come up and give the clergyman the next chance."

"You must hurry, or you will not all be finished when we arrive," remarked the captain; "for we shall touch Peck Slip Wharf in half an hour." My grandfather entered the cabin, and in ten minutes he appeared on deck razor in hand. He was smoothly shaved.

"Now," said the clergyman, "it is my turn."

"Certainly," said my grandfather. "You are next, but wait a moment, let me draw the razor across the strop once or twice."

Putting his foot upon the side rail of the deck, and placing one end of the strop upon his leg, he drew the razor several times across it. Then, as if by mistake, the razor flew from his hand; and dropped into the water! My grandfather, with well-feigned surprise, exclaimed in a voice of terror, "Good heavens! the razor has fallen overboard!"

Such a picture of consternation as covered one half of all the passengers' faces was never before witnessed. At first they were perfectly silent as if petrified with astonishment. But, in a few minutes, murmurs began to be heard, and soon swelled into exclamations. "An infernal hog!" said one. "The meanest thing I ever knew," remarked another. "He ought to be thrown overboard himself," cried several others



but all remembered that every man who got angry was to pay a fine of twenty dollars, and they did not repeat their remarks. Presently all eyes were turned upon the clergyman. He was the most forlorn picture of despair that could be imagined.

"Oh, this is dreadful!" he drawled, in a tone which seemed as if every word broke a heart-string. This was too much, and the whole crowd broke into another roar. Tranquillity was restored. The joke, though a hard one, was swallowed.

On the 7th of September, 1825, my father, who had been sick since the month of March, died at the age of forty-eight years. My mother was left with five children, of whom I, at fifteen years of age, was the eldest, while the youngest was but seven. It was soon apparent that my father had provided nothing for the support of his family: his estate was insolvent, and did not pay fifty cents on the dollar. My mother, by economy, industry, and perseverance, succeeded in a few years afterwards in redeeming the homestead and becoming its sole possessor; but, at the date of the death of my father, the world looked gloomy indeed; the few dollars that I had accumulated and loaned to my father, holding his note therefor, were decided to be the property of a minor, belonging to the father and so to the estate, and my small claim was ruled out. I was obliged to get trusted for the pair of shoes I wore to my father's funeral. I literally began the world with nothing, and was barefooted at that.

I went to Grassy Plain, a mile north-west of Bethel, and secured a situation as clerk in a store at six dollars a month and my board, and found an excellent home with Mrs. Jerusha Wheeler and her daughters, Jerusha and Mary. I chose my uncle, Alanson Taylor, as my guardian. I soon gained the confidence and esteem of my employers; they afforded me many facilities for making money on my own account, and I soon entered upon sundry speculations, and succeeded in getting a small sum of money ahead.

I made a very remarkable trade at one time for my employers by purchasing, in their absence, a whole waggon-load of green glass bottles of various sizes, for which I paid in unsaleable goods at very profitable prices. How to dispose of the bottles was then the problem, and as it was also desirable



to get rid of a large quantity of tin-ware which had been in the shop for years and was considerably "shop-worn," I conceived the idea of a lottery in which the highest prize should be twenty-five dollars, payable in any goods the winner desired, while there were to be fifty prizes of five dollars each, payable in goods, to be designated in the scheme. Then there were one hundred prizes of one dollar each, one hundred prizes of fifty cents each, and three hundred prizes of twenty-five cents each. It is unnecessary to state that the minor prizes consisted mainly of glass and tin-ware; the tickets sold like wildfire, and the worn tin and glass bottles were speedily turned into cash.

As my mother continued to keep the village tavern at Bethel, I usually went home on Saturday night and stayed till Monday morning, going to church with my mother on Sunday. This habit was the occasion of an adventure of momentous consequence to me. One Saturday evening, during a violent thunder shower, Miss Mary Wheeler, a milliner, sent me word that there was a girl from Bethel at her house, who had come up on horseback to get a new bonnet; that she was afraid to go back alone: and if I was going to Bethel that evening she wished me to escort her customer. I assented, and went over to "Aunt Rushia's," where I was introduced to "Chairy" (Charity) Hallett, a fair, rosy-cheeked, buxom girl, with beautiful white teeth. I assisted her to her saddle, and, mounting my own horse, we trotted towards Bethel.

My first impressions of this girl as I saw her at the house were exceedingly favourable. As soon as we started I began a conversation with her, and, finding her very affable, I regretted that the distance to Bethel was not five miles instead of one. A flash of lightning gave me a distinct view of the face of my fair companion, and then I wished the distance was twenty miles. During our ride, I learned that she was a tailoress working with Mr. Zerah Benedict, of Bethel. The next day I saw her at church, and, indeed, many Sundays afterwards, but I had no opportunity to renew the acquaintance that season.

Mrs. Jerusha Wheeler, with whom I boarded, and her daughter Jerusha, were familiarly known, the one as "Aunt Rushia,



and the other as "Rushia." Many of our store customers were hatters, and among the many kinds of furs we sold for the nap of hats was one known to the trade as "Russia." One day a hatter, Walter Dibble, called to buy some furs. I sold him several kinds, including "beaver" and "cony," and he then asked for some "Russia." We had none, and, as I wanted to play a joke upon him, I told him that Mrs. Wheeler had several hundred pounds of "Rushia."

"What on earth is a woman doing with 'Russia?'" said he.

I could not answer, but I assured him that there were one hundred and thirty pounds of old Russia and one hundred and fifty pounds of young Russia in Mrs. Wheeler's house, and under her charge, but whether or not it was for sale I could not say. Off he started to make the purchase and knocked at the door. Mrs. Wheeler, the elder, made her appearance.

"I want to get your Russia," said the hatter.

Mrs. Wheeler asked him to walk in and be seated. She, of course, supposed that he had come for her daughter "Rushia."

"What do you want of Rushia?" asked the old lady.

"To make hats," was the reply.

"To trim hats, I suppose you mean?" responded Mrs. Wheeler.

"No, for the outside of hats," replied the hatter.

"Well, I don't know much about hats," said the old lady, "but I will call my daughter."

Passing into another room where "Rushia" the younger was at work, she informed her that a man wanted her to make hats.

"Oh, he means sister Mary, probably. I suppose he wants some ladies' hats," replied Rushia, as she went into the parlour.

"This is my daughter," said the old lady.

"I want to get your Russia," said he, addressing the young lady.

"I suppose you wish to see my sister Mary; she is our milliner," said the young Rushia.

"I wish to see whoever owns the property," said the hatter.

Sister Mary was sent for, and, as she was introduced, the hatter informed her that he wished to buy her "Russia."



"Buy Rushia?" exclaimed Mary, in surprise; "I don't understand you."

"Your name is Miss Wheeler, I believe," said the hatter, who was annoyed by the difficulty he met with in being understood.

"It is, sir."

"Ah! very well. Is there old and young Russia in the house?"

"I believe there is," said Mary, surprised at the familiar manner in which he spoke of her mother and sister, who were present.

"What is the price of old Russia per pound?" asked the hatter.

"I believe, sir, that old Rushia is not for sale," replied Mary, indignantly.

"Well, what do ask for young Russia?" pursued the hatter.

"Sir," said Miss Rushia the younger, springing to her feet, "do you come here to insult defenceless females? If you do, sir, our brother, who is in the garden, will punish you as you deserve."

"Ladies!" exclaimed the hatter, in astonishment, "what on earth have I done to offend you? I came here on a business matter. I want to buy some Russia. I was told you had old and young Russia in the house. Indeed, this young lady just stated such to be the fact, but she says the old Russia is not for sale. Now, if I can buy the young Russia I want to do so; but if that can't be done, please to say so, and I will trouble you no further."

"Mother, open the door and let this man go out; he is undoubtedly crazy," said Miss Mary.

"By thunder! I believe I shall be if I remain here long," exclaimed the hatter, considerably excited. "I wonder if folks never do business in these parts, that you think a man is crazy if he attempts such a thing?"

"Business! poor man!" said Mary soothingly, approaching the door.

"I am not a poor man, madam," replied the hatter. "My name is Walter Dibble; I carry on hatting extensively in Danbury; I came to Grassy Plain to buy fur, and have pur-



chased some 'beaver' and 'cony,' and now it seems I am to be called 'crazy' and a 'poor man' because I want to buy a little Russia to make up my assortment."

The ladies began to open their eyes; they saw that Mr. Dibble was quite in earnest, and his explanation threw considerable light upon the subject.

"Who sent you here?" asked Sister Mary.

"The clerk at the opposite store," was the reply.

"He is a wicked young fellow for making all this trouble," said the old lady; "he has been doing this for a joke."

"A joke!" exclaimed Dibble, in surprise. "Have you no Russia, then?"

"My name is Jerusha, and so is my daughter's," said Mrs. Wheeler, "and that, I suppose, is what he meant by telling you about old and young Rushia."

Mr. Dibble bolted through the door without another word, and made directly for our store. "You young scamp!" said he, as he entered; "what did you mean by sending me over there to buy Russia?"

"I did not send you to *buy* Rushia; I supposed you were either a bachelor or a widower and wanted to *marry* Rushia," I replied, with a serious countenance.

"You lie, you young dog, and you know it; but never mind, I'll pay you off some day;" and taking his furs, he departed with less ill-humour than could have been expected under the circumstances.

Among our customers were three or four old Revolutionary pensioners, who traded out the amounts of their pensions before they were due, leaving their papers as security. One of these pensioners was old Bevans, commonly known as "Uncle Bibbins," a man who loved his glass, and was very prone to relate romantic Revolutionary anecdotes and adventures, in which he, of course, was conspicuous. At one time he was in our debt, and though we held his pension papers, it would be three months before the money could be drawn. It was desirable to get him away for that length of time, and we hinted to him that it would be pleasant to make a visit to Guilford, where he had relations, but he would not go. Finally, I hit upon a plan which "moved" him.



A journeyman hatter, named Benton, who was fond of a practical joke, was let into the secret, and was persuaded to call "Uncle Bibbins" a coward, to tell him that he had been wounded in the back, and thus to provoke a duel, which he did; and at my suggestion "Uncle Bibbins" challenged Benton to fight him with musket and ball at a distance of twenty yards. The challenge was accepted; I was chosen second by "Uncle Bibbins," and the duel was to come off immediately. My principal, taking me aside, begged me to put nothing in the guns but blank cartridges. I assured him it should be so, and therefore that he might feel perfectly safe.

The ground was measured in the lot at the rear of our store, and the principals and seconds took their places. At the word given, both parties fired. "Uncle Bibbins," of course, escaped unhurt, but Benton leaped several feet into the air, and fell upon the ground with a dreadful yell, as if he had been really shot. "Uncle Bibbins" was frightened. I ran to him, told him I had neglected to extract the bullet from *his* gun (which was literally true, as there was no bullet in it to extract), and he supposed, of course, he had killed his adversary. I then whispered to him to go immediately to Guilford, to keep quiet, and he should hear from me as soon as it would be safe to do so. He started up the street on a run, and immediately quit the town for Guilford, where he kept himself quiet until it was time for him to return and sign his papers. I then wrote him that "he could return in safety; that his adversary had recovered from his wound, and now forgave him all, as he felt himself much to blame for having insulted a man of his known courage."

"Uncle Bibbins" returned, signed the papers, and we obtained the pension money. A few days thereafter he met Benton.

"My brave old friend," said Benton, "I forgive you my terrible wound and long confinement on the brink of the grave, and I beg you to forgive me also. I insulted you without a cause."

"I forgive you freely," said "Uncle Bibbins," "but," he added, "you must be careful next time how you insult a dead shot."



## CHAPTER III.

## IN BUSINESS FOR MYSELF.

MR. OLIVER TAYLOR removed from Danbury to Brooklyn, Long Island, where he kept a grocery store, and also had a large comb factory and a comb store in New York. In the fall of 1826, he offered me a situation as clerk in his Brooklyn store, which I accepted, and before long was entrusted with the purchasing of all goods for his store. I bought for cash entirely, going into the lower part of New York city in search of the cheapest market for groceries, often attending auctions of teas, sugars, molasses, &c., watching the sales, noting prices and buyers, and frequently combining with other grocers to bid off large lots, which we subsequently divided, giving each of us the quantity wanted at a lower rate than if the goods had passed into other hands, compelling us to pay another profit.

Well treated as I was by my employer, who manifested great interest in me, still I was dissatisfied. A salary was not sufficient for me. My disposition was of that speculative character which refused to be satisfied unless I was engaged in some business where my profits might be enhanced, or, at least, made to depend upon my energy, perseverance, attention to business, tact, and "calculation."

In the following summer, 1827, I was taken down with the small-pox, and was confined to the house for several months. This sickness made a sad inroad upon my means. When I was sufficiently recovered, I went home to recruit.

During my convalescence at my mother's house, I visited my old friends and neighbours, and had the opportunity to renew my acquaintance with the attractive tailoress, "Chairy" Hallett. A month afterwards I returned to Brooklyn, where I gave Mr. Taylor notice of my desire to leave his employment; and I then opened a porter-house on my own account. In a few months I sold out to good advantage, and



accepted a favourable offer to engage as clerk in a similar establishment, kept by Mr. David Thorp, 29, Peck Slip, New York.

In February, 1828, I returned to Bethel, and opened a retail fruit and confectionery store in a part of my grandfather's carriage-house, which was situated on the main street, and which was offered to me rent free if I would return to my native village and establish some sort of business. This beginning of business on my own account was an eventful era in my life. My total capital was one hundred and twenty dollars, fifty of which I had expended in fitting up the store, and the remaining seventy dollars purchased my stock in trade. I had arranged with fruit dealers whom I knew in New York to receive my orders, and I decided to open my establishment on the first Monday in May—our “general training” day.

It was a “red letter” day for me. The village was crowded with people from the surrounding region, and the novelty of my little shop attracted attention. Long before noon I was obliged to call in one of my old school-mates to assist in waiting upon my numerous customers, and when I closed at night I had the satisfaction of reckoning up sixty-three dollars as my day's receipts. Nor, although I had received the entire cost of my goods, less seven dollars, did the stock seem seriously diminished; showing that my profits had been large. I need not say how much gratified I was with the result of this first day's experiment. The store was a fixed fact. I went to New York and expended all my money in a stock of fancy goods, such as pocket-books, combs, beads, rings, pocket-knives, and a few toys. These, with fruit, nuts, &c., made the business good through the summer, and in the fall I added stewed oysters to the inducements.

I used to have some curious customers. On one occasion a young man called on me and selected a pocket-book which pleased him, asking me to give him credit for a few weeks. I told him that if he wanted any article of necessity in my line, I should not object to trust him for a short time, but it struck me a pocket-book was a decided superfluity to a man who had no money.



For any excess of the jocose element in my character, part of the blame must attach to my early surroundings as a village clerk and merchant. In that true resort of village wits and wags, the country store, fun, pure and simple, will be sure to find the surface.

The following scene makes a chapter in the history of Connecticut, as the State was when the "blue laws" were something more than a dead letter. To swear in those days was according to custom, but contrary to law. A person from New York State, whom I will call Crofut, who was a frequent visitor at my store, was equally noted for his self-will and his really terrible profanity. One day he was in my little establishment engaged in conversation, when Nathan Seelye, Esq., one of our village justices of the peace, and a man of strict religious principles, came in, and hearing Crofut's profane language, he told him he considered it his duty to fine him one dollar for swearing.

Crofut responded immediately with an oath, that he did not care a d——n for the Connecticut blue laws.

"That will make two dollars," said Mr. Seelye.

This brought forth another oath.

"Three dollars," said the sturdy justice.

Nothing but oaths were given in reply, until Esquire Seelye declared the damage to the Connecticut laws to amount to fifteen dollars.

Crofut took out a twenty-dollar bill, and handed it to the justice of the peace with an oath.

"Sixteen dollars," said Mr. Seelye, counting out four dollars to hand to Mr. Crofut, as his change.

"Oh, keep it, keep it," said Crofut, "I don't want any change, I'll d——n soon swear out the balance." He did so, after which he was more circumspect in his conversation, remarking that twenty dollars a day for swearing was about as much as he could stand.

On another occasion, a man arrested for assault and battery was to be tried before my grandfather, who was a justice of the peace. A young medical student, named Newton, volunteered to defend the prisoner, and Mr. Couch, the grand jurymen, came to me and said that as the prisoner had engaged



a pettifogger, the State ought to have some one to represent its interest, and he would give me a dollar to present the case. I accepted the fee and proposition. The fame of the "eminent counsel" on both sides drew quite a crowd to hear the case. As for the case itself, it was useless to argue it, for the guilt of the prisoner was established by evidence of half a dozen witnesses. However, Newton was bound to display himself, and so, rising with much dignity, he addressed my grandfather with, "May it please the honourable court," &c., proceeding with a mixture of poetry and invective against Couch, the grand jurymen, whom he assumed to be the vindictive plaintiff in this case. After alluding to him as such for the twentieth time, my grandfather stopped Newton in the midst of his splendid peroration and informed him that Mr. Couch was not the plaintiff in the case.

"Not the plaintiff! Then, may it please your honour, I should like to know who *is* the plaintiff?" inquired Newton.

He was quietly informed that the State of Connecticut was the plaintiff, whereupon Newton dropped into his seat as if he had been shot. Thereupon, I rose with great confidence, and speaking from my notes, proceeded to show the guilt of the prisoner from the evidence; that there was no discrepancy in the testimony; that none of the witnesses had been impeached; that no defence had been offered; that I was astonished at the audacity of both counsel and prisoner in not pleading guilty at once; and then, soaring aloft on general principles, I began to look about for a safe place to alight, when my grandfather interrupted me with—

"Young man, will you have the kindness to inform the court which side you are pleading for—the plaintiff or the defendant?"

It was my turn to drop, which I did amid a shout of laughter from every corner of the court-room. Newton, who had been very downcast, looked up with a broad grin, and the two "eminent counsel" sneaked out of the room in company, while the prisoner was bound over to the next County Court for trial.

While my business in Bethel continued to increase beyond my expectations, I was also happy in believing that my suit



with the fair tailoress, Charity Hallet, was duly progressing.

How I managed one of our sleigh rides may be worth narrating. My grandfather would, at any time, let me have a horse and sleigh, always excepting his new sleigh, the finest in the village, and a favourite horse called "Arabian." I especially coveted this turn-out for one of our parties, knowing that I could eclipse all my comrades, and so I asked grandfather if I could have "Arabian" and the new sleigh.

"Yes, if you have twenty dollars in your pocket," was the reply.

I immediately showed the money, and putting it back into my pocket, said with a laugh, "You see I have the money. I am much obliged to you ; I suppose I can have 'Arab' and the new sleigh ? "

Of course, he meant to deny me by making what he thought to be an impossible condition, to wit : that I should hire the team, at a good round price, if I had it at all, but I had caught him so suddenly that he was compelled to consent, and "Chairy" and I had the crack team of the party.

There was a young apprentice to the tailoring trade in Bethel, whom I will call John Mallett, whose education had been much neglected, and who had been paying his addresses to a certain "Lucretia" for some six months, with a strong probability of being jilted at last. On a Sunday evening she had declined to take his arm, accepting instead the arm of the next man who offered, and Mallett determined to demand an explanation. He accordingly came to me the Saturday evening following, asking me, when I had closed my store, to write a strong and remonstratory "love-letter" for him. I asked "Bill Shepard," who was present, to remain and assist, and in due time, the joint efforts of Shepard, Mallett and myself resulted in the following production. I give the letter as an illustrative chapter in real life. It is certainly not after the manner of Chesterfield, but it is such a letter as a disappointed lover, spurred by

" The green-eyed monster, which doth make  
The meat it feeds on,"

frequently indites. With a demand from Mallett that he



should begin in strong terms, and Shepard acting as scribe we concocted the following:—

“BETHEL, —, 18—.

“MISS LUCRETIA,—I write this to ask an explanation of your conduct in giving me the mitten on Sunday night last. If you think, madam, that you can trifle with my affections, and turn me off for every little whipper-snapper that you can pick up, you will find yourself considerably mistaken.” [We read thus far to Mallett, and it met his approval. He said he liked the idea of calling her “madam,” for he thought it sounded so “distant,” it would hurt her feelings very much. The term “little whipper-snapper” also delighted him. He said he guessed that would make her feel cheap. Shepard and myself were not quite so sure of its aptitude, since the chap who succeeded in capturing Lucretia on the occasion alluded to was a head and shoulders taller than Mallett. However, we did not intimate our thoughts to Mallett, and he desired us to “go ahead and give her another dose.”] “You don’t know me, madam, if you think you can snap me up in this way. I wish you to understand that I can have the company of girls as much above you as the sun is above the earth, and I won’t stand any of your impudent nonsense nohow.” [This was duly read and approved. “Now,” said Mallett, “try to touch her feelings. Remind her of the pleasant hours we have spent together;” and we continued as follows:] “My dear Lucretia when I think of the many pleasant hours we have spent together—of the delightful walks which we have had on moonlight evenings to Fenner’s Rocks, Chestnut Ridge, Grassy Plain, Wildcat and Puppy-town—of the strolls which we have taken upon Shelter Rocks, Cedar Hill—the visits we have made to Old Lane, Wolfpits, Toad-hole and Plumtrees\*—when all these things come rushing on my mind, and when, my dear girl, I remember how often you have told me that you loved me better than anybody else, and I assured you my feelings were the same as yours, it almost breaks my heart to think of last Sunday night.” [“Can’t you stick in some affecting poetry here?” said Mallett. Shepard could not recollect any to the point, nor could I, but as the exigency of the case seemed to

\* These were the euphonious names of localities in the vicinity of Bethel



require it, we concluded to manufacture a verse or two, which we did as follows:]

"Lucretia, dear, what have I done,  
That you should use me thus, and so  
To take the arm of Tom Beers' son,  
And let your dearest true love go ?

"Miserable fate, to lose you now,  
And tear this bleeding heart asunder !  
Will you forget your tender vow ?  
I can't believe it—no, by thunder ! "

[Mallet did not like the word "thunder," but being informed that no other word could be substituted without destroying both rhyme and reason, he consented that it should remain, provided we added two more stanzas of a *softer* nature ; something, he said, that would make the tears come, if possible We then ground out the following:]

"Lucretia, dear, do write to Jack,  
And say with Beers you are not smitten ;  
And thus to me in love come back,  
And give all other boys the mitten.

"Do this, Lucretia, and till death  
I'll love you to intense distraction ;  
I'll spend for you my every breath,  
And we will live in satisfaction."

["That will do very well," said Mallett. "Now, I guess you had better blow her up a little more." We obeyed orders as follows:] "It makes me mad to think what a fool I was to give you that finger-ring and bosom-pin, and spend so much time in your company, just to be flirted and bamboozled as I was on Sunday night last. If you continue this course of conduct we part for ever, and I will thank you to send back that jewelry. I would sooner see it crushed under my feet than worn by a person who abused me as you have done. I shall despise you for ever, if you don't change your conduct towards me, and send me a letter of apology on Monday next. I shall not go to meeting to-morrow, for I would scorn to sit in the same meeting-house with you until I have an explanation of your conduct. If you allow any young man to go home with you to-morrow night, I shall know it, for you will be watched." ["There," said Mallet, "that is pretty strong. Now, I guess you had better touch her feelings once more and wind up the letter." We proceeded as follows:] "My sweet girl, if you



only knew the sleepless nights which I have spent during the present week, the torment and sufferings which I endure on your account : if you could but realize that I regard the world as less than nothing without you, I am certain you would pity me. A homely cot and a crust of bread with my adorable Lucretia would be a paradise, where a palace without you would be a Hades." ["What in thunder is Hades?" inquired Jack. We explained. He considered the figures rather bold, and requested us to close as soon as possible.] "Now, dearest, in bidding you adieu, I implore you to reflect on our past enjoyments, look forward with pleasure to our future happy meetings, and rely upon your affectionate Jack in storm or calm, in sickness, distress, or want, for all these will be powerless to change my love. I hope to hear from you on Monday next, and, if favourable, I shall be happy to call on you the same evening, when in ecstasie joy we will laugh at the past, hope for the future, and draw consolation from the fact that 'the course of true love never did run smooth.' This from your disconsolate, but still hoping, lover and admirer,

"JACK MALLETT.

"P. S.—On reflection, I have concluded to go to meeting to-morrow. If all is well, hold your handkerchief in your left hand as you stand up to sing with the choir—in which case I shall expect the pleasure of giving you my arm to-morrow night.

"J. M."

The effect of this letter upon Lucretia, I regret to say, was not as favourable as could have been desired. She declined to move her handkerchief from her right hand, and she returned the "ring and bosom-pin" to her disconsolate admirer, while, not many months after, Mallett's rival led Lucretia to the altar. As for Mallett's agreement to pay Shepard and myself five pounds of carpet rags and twelve yards of broadcloth "lists" for our services, owing to his ill success, we compromised for one-half the amount.



## CHAPTER IV.

## STRUGGLES FOR A LIVELIHOOD.

DURING this season I made arrangements with Mr. Samuel Sherwood, of Bridgeport, to go on an exploring expedition to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, where we understood there was a fine opening for a lottery office, and where we meant to try our fortunes, provided the prospects should equal our expectations. We went to New York, where I had an interview with Mr. Dudley S. Gregory, the principal business man of Messrs. Yates and McIntyre, who dissuaded me from going to Pittsburg, and offered me the entire lottery agency for the State of Tennessee, if I would go to Nashville and open an office. The offer was tempting, but the distance was too far from a certain tailoress in Bethel.

The Pittsburg trip given up, Sherwood and I went to Philadelphia for a pleasure excursion, and put up at Congress Hall in Chestnut Street, where we lived in much grander style than we had been accustomed to, and for a week we were in clover. At the end of that time, however, when we concluded to start for home, the amount of our hotel bill astounded us. After paying it and securing tickets for New York, our combined purses showed a balance of but twenty-seven cents.

Twenty-five cents of this sum went to the boot-black. Fortunately, our breakfast was included in our bill, and we secured from the table a few biscuits for the dinner on the way to New York.

On arriving, we carried our own baggage to Holt's Hotel. The next morning Sherwood obtained a couple of dollars from a friend, and went to Newark and borrowed fifty dollars from his cousin, Dr. Sherwood, loaning me one-half the sum. After a few days' sojourn in the city, we returned home.

During our stay in New York, I derived considerable information from the city managers with regard to the lottery



business, and thereafter I bought my tickets directly from the Connecticut lottery managers at what was termed "the scheme price," and also established agencies throughout the country, selling considerable quantities of tickets at handsome profits. My uncle, Alanson Taylor, joined me in the business, and, as we sold several prizes, my office came to be considered "lucky," and I received orders from all parts of the country.

During this time I kept a close eye upon the attractive tailoress, Charity Hallett, and in the summer of 1829 I asked her hand in marriage. My suit was accepted, and the wedding day was appointed; I, meanwhile, applying myself closely to business, and no one but the parties immediately interested suspecting that the event was so near at hand. Miss Hallett went to New York in October, ostensibly to visit her uncle, Nathan Beers, who resided at No. 3, Allen Street. I followed in November, pressed by the necessity of purchasing goods for my store; and the evening after my arrival, Nov. 8, 1829, the Rev. Dr. McAuley married us in the presence of sundry friends and relatives of my wife, and I became the husband of one of the best women in the world. In the course of the week we went back to Bethel and took board in the family where Charity Barnum, as "Chairy" Hallett, had previously resided.

I do not approve or recommend early marriages. The minds of men and women taking so important a step in life should be matured; but, although I was only little more than nineteen years old when I was married, I have always felt assured that if I had waited twenty years longer I could not have found another woman so well suited to my disposition and so admirable and valuable in every character as a wife, a mother, and a friend.

In the winter of 1829-30, my lottery business had so extended that I had branch offices in Danbury, Norwalk, Stamford, and Middletown, as well as agencies in the small villages for thirty miles around Bethel. I had also purchased from my grandfather three acres of land, on which I built a house and went to housekeeping. My lottery business, which was with a few large customers, was so arranged that I could



safely entrust it to an agent, making it necessary for me to find some other field for my individual enterprise.

So I tried my hand as an auctioneer in the book trade, travelling about the country, but at Newburgh, New York, several of my best books were stolen, and I quitted the business in disgust.

In July, 1831, my uncle, Alanson Taylor, and myself opened a country store, in a building which I had put up in Bethel in the previous spring, and we stocked the "yellow store," as it was called, with a full assortment of groceries, hardware, crockery, and "notions;" but we were not successful in the enterprise, and in October following I bought out my uncle's interest and we dissolved partnership.

About this time circumstances, partly religious and partly political in their character, led me into still another field of enterprise, which honourably opened to me that notoriety of which in later life I surely have had a surfeit. Considering my youth, this new enterprise reflected credit upon my ability as well as energy, and so I may be excused if I now recur to it with something like pride.

In a period of strong political excitement, I wrote several communications for the Danbury weekly paper, setting forth what I conceived to be the dangers of a sectarian interference which was then apparent in political affairs. The publication of these communications was refused, and I accordingly purchased a press and types, and October 19, 1831, I issued the first number of my own paper, *The Herald of Freedom*.

I entered upon the editorship of this journal with all the vigour and vehemence of youth. The boldness with which the paper was conducted soon excited widespread attention, and commanded a circulation which extended beyond the immediate locality into nearly every State in the Union. But lacking that experience which induces caution, and without the dread of consequences, I frequently laid myself open to the charge of libel, and three times in three years I was prosecuted. A Danbury butcher, a zealous politician, brought a civil suit against me for accusing him of being a spy in a Democratic caucus. On the first trial the jury did not agree, but after a second trial I was fined several hundred



dollars. Another libel suit against me was withdrawn. The third was sufficiently important to warrant the following detail :—

A criminal prosecution was brought against me for stating in my paper that a man in Bethel, prominent in church, had “been guilty of taking *usury* of an orphan boy,” and for severely commenting on the fact in my editorial columns. When the case came to trial the truth of my statement was substantially proved, and even by the prosecuting party. But “the greater the truth, the greater the libel,” and then I had used the term “usury,” instead of extortion, or note-shaving, or some other expression which might have softened the verdict. The result was that I was sentenced to pay a fine of one hundred dollars, and to be imprisoned in the common jail for sixty days.

The most comfortable provision was made for me in Danbury jail. My room was papered and carpeted ; I lived well ; I was overwhelmed with the constant visits of my friends ; I edited my paper as usual, and received large accessions to my subscription list ; and at the end of my sixty days’ term the event was celebrated by a large concourse of people from the surrounding country. The court-room in which I was convicted was the scene of the celebration. An ode, written for the occasion, was sung ; an eloquent oration on the freedom of the press was delivered ; and several hundred gentlemen afterwards partook of a sumptuous dinner, followed by appropriate toasts and speeches. Then came the triumphant part of the ceremonial, which was reported in my paper of December 12, 1832, as follows :—

“P. T. BARNUM and the band of music took their seats in a coach drawn by six horses, which had been prepared for the occasion. The coach was preceded by forty horsemen and a marshal bearing the national standard. Immediately in the rear of the coach was the carriage of the orator and the president of the day, followed by the committee of arrangements and sixty carriages of citizens, which joined in escorting the editor to his home in Bethel.

“When the procession commenced its march amidst the roar of cannon, three cheers were given by several hundred citizens who did not join in the procession. The band of music continued to play a variety of national airs until their arrival in Bethel (a distance of three miles), when they struck up the beautiful and appropriate



tune of 'Home, Sweet Home!' After giving three hearty cheers, the procession returned to Danbury. The utmost harmony and unanimity of feeling prevailed throughout the day, and we are happy to add that no accident occurred to mar the festivities of the occasion."

My editorial career was one of continual contest. I, however, published the 160th number of *The Herald of Freedom* in Danbury, November 5, 1834, after which my brother-in-law, John W. Amerman, issued the paper for me at Norwalk till the following year, when the *Herald* was sold to Mr. George Taylor.

So far as I was concerned, my store was not a success. Ordinary trade was too slow for me. I bought largely, and in order to sell I was obliged to give extensive credits. Hence I had an accumulation of bad debts; and my old ledger presents a long series of accounts balanced by "death," by "running away," by "failing," and by other similarly remunerative returns.

There was nothing more for me to do in Bethel; and in the winter of 1834-5 I removed my family to New York, where I hired a house in Hudson Street. I had no pecuniary resources, excepting such as might be derived from debts left for collection with my agent at Bethel, and I went to the metropolis literally to seek my fortune. I hoped to secure a situation in some mercantile house, not at a fixed salary, but so as to derive such portion of the profits as might be due to my individual tact, energy, and perseverance in the interests of the business. But I could find no such position; my resources began to fail; my family were in ill health; I must do something for a living; and so I acted as "drummer" to several stores, which allowed me a small commission on sales to customers of my introduction.

Nor did all my efforts secure a situation for me during the whole winter; but in the spring I received several hundred dollars from my agent in Bethel, and finding no better business, May 1, 1835, I opened a small private boarding-house at No. 52, Frankfort Street. We soon had a very good run of custom from our Connecticut acquaintances who had occasion to visit New York, and as this business did not sufficiently occupy my time, I bought an interest with Mr. John Moody in a grocery store, No. 156, South Street.





MY DELIVERY FROM IMPRISONMENT.



Although the years of manhood brought cares, anxieties, and struggles for a livelihood, they did not change my nature, and the jocose element was still an essential ingredient of my being. I loved fun, practical fun, for itself and for the enjoyment which it brought. During the year I occasionally visited Bridgeport, where I almost always found at the hotel a noted joker, named Darrow, who spared neither friend nor foe in his tricks. He was the life of the bar-room, and would always try to entrap some stranger in a bet, and so win a treat for the company. He made several ineffectual attempts upon me, and at last, one evening, Darrow, who stuttered, made a final trial as follows:—"Come, Barnum, I'll make you another proposition. I'll bet you hain't got a whole shirt on your back." The catch consists in the fact that generally only one-half of that convenient garment is on the back; but I had anticipated the proposition—in fact I had induced a friend, Mr. Hough, to put Darrow up to the trick—and had folded a shirt nicely upon my back, securing it there with my suspenders. The bar-room was crowded with customers, who thought that if I made the bet I should be nicely caught, and I made pretence of playing off, and at the same time stimulated Darrow to press the bet by saying,

"That is a foolish bet to make; I am sure my shirt is whole, because my shirt is nearly new; but I don't like to bet on such a subject."

"A good reason why," said Darrow, in great glee; "it's ragged. Come, I'll bet you a treat for the whole company you hain't got a whole shirt on your b-b-b-back!"

"I'll bet my shirt is cleaner than yours," I replied.

"That's nothing to do w-w-with the case; it's ragged, and y-y-you know it."

"I know it is not," I replied, with pretended anger, which caused the crowd to laugh heartily.

"You poor ragged f-f-fellow, come down here from D-D-Danbury, I'm sorry for you," said Darrow, tantalizingly.

"You would not pay if you lost," I remarked.

"Here's f-f-five dollars I'll put in Captain Hinman's (the landlord's) hands. Now b-b-bet if you dare, you ragged c-c-creature, you,"



I put five dollars in Captain Hinman's hands, and told him to treat the company from it if I lost the bet.

"Remember," said Darrow, "I b-b-bet you hain't got a whole shirt on your b-b-back!"

"All right," said I, taking off my coat and commencing to unbutton my vest. The whole company, feeling sure that I was caught, began to laugh heartily. Old Darrow fairly danced with delight, and as I laid my coat on a chair he came running up in front of me, and slapping his hands together, exclaimed:

"You needn't t-t-take off any more c-c-clothes, for if it ain't all on your b-b-back, you've lost it."

"If it is, I suppose you have!" I replied, pulling the whole shirt from off my back!

Such a shriek of laughter as burst forth from the crowd I scarcely ever heard, and certainly such a blank countenance as old Darrow exhibited it would be hard to conceive. Seeing that he was most incontinently "done for," and perceiving that his neighbour Hough had helped to do it, he ran up to him in great anger, and shaking his fist in his face, exclaimed:

"H-H-Hough, you infernal r-r-rascal, to go against your own neighbour in favour of a D-D-Danbury man. I'll pay you for that some time, you see if I d-d-don't."

All hands went up to the bar and drank with a hearty goodwill, for it was seldom that Darrow got taken in, and he was such an inveterate joker they liked to see him paid in his own coin. Never till the day of his death did he hear the last of the "whole shirt."



## CHAPTER V.

## MY START AS A SHOWMAN.

THE least deserving of all my efforts in the show line was the one which introduced me to the business ; a scheme in no sense of my own devising ; one which had been some time before the public and which had so many vouchers for its genuineness that at the time of taking possession of it I honestly believed it to be genuine.

In the summer of 1835, Mr. Coley Bartram, of Reading, Connecticut, informed me that he had owned an interest in a remarkable negro woman who he believed to be one hundred and sixty-one years old, and whom he also believed to have been the nurse of General Washington. He then showed me a copy of the following advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, of July 15, 1835 :

" CURIOSITY.—The citizens of Philadelphia and its vicinity have an opportunity of witnessing at the Masonic Hall, one of the greatest natural curiosities ever witnessed, viz. : JOICE HETH, a negress, aged 161 years, who formerly belonged to the father of General Washington. She has been a member of the Baptist Church one hundred and sixteen years, and can rehearse many hymns, and sing them according to former custom. She was born near the old Potomac River in Virginia, and has for ninety or one hundred years lived in Paris, Kentucky, with the Bowling family.

" All who have seen this extraordinary woman are satisfied of the truth of the account of her age. The evidence of the Bowling family, which is respectable, is strong, but the original bill of sale of Augustine Washington, in his own handwriting, and other evidences which the proprietor has in his possession, will satisfy even the most incredulous.

" A lady will attend at the hall during the afternoon and evening for the accommodation of those ladies who may call."

Mr. Bartram further stated that he had sold out his interest to his partner, R. W. Lindsay, of Jefferson county, Kentucky, who was then exhibiting Joice Heth in Philadelphia, but was anxious to sell out and go home—the alleged reason being that he had very little tact as a showman. As the New York



papers had also contained some account of Joice Heth, I went on to Philadelphia to see Mr. Lindsay and his exhibition.

Joice Heth was certainly a remarkable curiosity, and she looked as if she might have been far older than her age as advertised. She was apparently in good health and spirits, but from age or disease, or both, was unable to change her position; she could move one arm at will, but her lower limbs could not be straightened; her left arm lay across her breast, and she could not remove it; the fingers of her left hand were drawn down so as nearly to close it, and were fixed; the nails on that hand were almost four inches long, and extended above her wrist; the nails on her large toes had grown to the thickness of a quarter of an inch; her head was covered with a thick bush of grey hair; but she was toothless and totally blind, and her eyes had sunk so deeply in the sockets as to have disappeared altogether.

Nevertheless, she was pert and sociable, and would talk as long as people would converse with her. She was quite garrulous about her *protégé* "dear little George," at whose birth she declared she was present, having been at the time a slave of Elizabeth Atwood, a half-sister of Augustine Washington, the father of George Washington. As nurse, she put the first clothes on the infant, and she claimed to have "raised him." She professed to be a member of the Baptist Church, talking much in her way on religious subjects, and she sang a variety of ancient hymns.

In proof of her extraordinary age and pretensions, Mr. Lindsay exhibited a bill of sale, dated February 5, 1727, from Augustine Washington, County of Westmoreland, Virginia, to Elizabeth Atwood, a half-sister and neighbour of Mr. Washington, conveying "one negro woman, named Joice Heth, aged fifty-four years, for and in consideration of the sum of thirty-three pounds lawful money of Virginia." It was further claimed that she had long been a nurse in the Washington family; she was called in at the birth of George, and clothed the new-born infant. The evidence seemed authentic, and in answer to the inquiry why so remarkable a discovery had not been made before, a satisfactory explanation was



given in the statement that she had been carried from Virginia to Kentucky, had been on the plantation of John S. Bowling so long that no one knew or cared how old she was, and only recently the accidental discovery by Mr. Bowling's son of the old bill of sale in the Record Office of Virginia had led to the identification of this negro woman "as the nurse of Washington."

Everything seemed so straightforward that I was anxious to become proprietor of this novel exhibition, which was offered to me at one thousand dollars, though the price first demanded was three thousand. I had five hundred dollars, borrowed five hundred dollars more, sold out my interest in the grocery business to my partner, and began life as a showman. At the outset of my career I saw that everything depended on getting the people to think, and talk, and become curious and excited over and about the "rare spectacle." Accordingly, posters, transparencies, advertisements, newspaper paragraphs—all calculated to extort attention—were employed, regardless of expense. My exhibition rooms in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Albany, and in other large and small cities, were continually thronged, and much money was made. In the following February Joice Heth died, literally of old age, and her remains received a respectable burial in the town of Bethel.

At a post-mortem examination of Joice Heth by Dr. David L. Rogers, in the presence of some medical students, it was thought that the absence of ossification indicated considerably less age than had been assumed for her; but the doctors disagreed, and this "dark subject" will probably always continue to be shrouded in mystery.

I had at last found my true vocation. My next venture, whatever it may have been in other respects, had the merit of being, in every essential, unmistakably genuine. I engaged from the Albany Museum an Italian who called himself "Signor Antonio," and who performed certain remarkable feats of balancing, stilt-walking, plate-spinning, &c. I made terms with him for one year to exhibit anywhere in the United States at twelve dollars a week and expenses, and induced him to change his stage name to "Signor Vivalla." I then wrote a



notice of his wonderful qualities and performances, printed it in one of the Albany papers as news, sent copies to the theatrical managers in New York and in other cities, and went with Vivalla to the metropolis.

Manager William Dinneford, of the Franklin Theatre, had seen so many performances of the kind that he declined to engage my "eminent Italian artist;" but I persuaded him to try Vivalla one night for nothing, and by the potent aid of printers' ink the house was crammed. I appeared as a supernumerary to assist Vivalla in arranging his plates and other "properties," and to hand him his gun to fire while he was hopping on one stilt ten feet high. This was my "first appearance on any stage." The applause which followed Vivalla's feats was tremendous, and Manager Dinneford was so delighted that he engaged him for the remainder of the week at fifty dollars. At the close of the performance, in response to a call from the house, I made a speech for Vivalla, thanking the audience for their appreciation, and announcing a repetition of the exhibition every evening during the week.

Vivalla remained a second week at the Franklin Theatre, for which I received 150 dollars. I realised the same sum for a week in Boston. We then went to Washington to fulfil an engagement which was far from successful, since my remuneration depended upon the receipts, and it snowed continually during the week. I was a loser to such an extent that I had not funds enough to return to Philadelphia. I pawned my watch and chain for thirty-five dollars, when, fortunately, Manager Wemyss arrived on Saturday morning, and loaned me the money to redeem my property.

As this was my first visit to Washington, I was much interested in visiting the Capitol and other public buildings. I also satisfied my curiosity in seeing Clay, Calhoun, Benton, John Quincy Adams, Richard M. Johnson, Polk, and other leading statesmen of the time.

I went with Vivalla to Philadelphia, and opened at the Walnut Street Theatre. Though his performances were very meritorious and were well received, theatricals were dull and houses were slim. It was evident that something must be done to stimulate the public.



And now that instinct—I think it must be—which can arouse a community and make it patronise, provided the article offered is worthy of patronage—an instinct which served me strangely in later years, astonishing the public and surprising me—came to my relief, and the help, curiously enough, appeared in the shape of an emphatic hiss from the pit!

This hiss, I discovered, came from one Roberts, a circus performer, and I had an interview with him. He was a professional balancer and juggler, who boasted that he could do all Vivalla had done and something more. I at once published a card in Vivalla's name, offering 1,000 dollars to anyone who would publicly perform Vivalla's feats at such a place as should be designated, and Roberts issued a counter card, accepting the offer. I then contracted with Mr. Warren, treasurer of the Walnut Street Theatre, for one-third of the proceeds, if I should bring the receipts up to 400 dollars a night—an agreement he could well afford to make, as his receipts the night before had been but seventy-five dollars. From him I went to Roberts, who seemed disposed to "back down," but I told him I should not insist upon the terms of his published card, and asked him if he was under engagement. Learning that he was not, I offered him thirty dollars to perform under my direction one night at the Walnut, and he accepted. A great trial of skill between Roberts and Vivalla was duly announced by posters and through the press. Meanwhile they rehearsed privately, to see what tricks each could perform, and the business was completely arranged.

Public excitement was at fever heat, and on the night of the trial the pit and upper boxes were crowded to the full. The "contest" between the performers was eager, and each had his party in the house. So far as I could learn, no one complained that he did not get all he paid for on that occasion. I engaged Roberts for a month, and his subsequent "contests" with Vivalla amused the public and put money in my purse.

In April, 1836, I connected myself with Aaron Turner's travelling circus company as ticket-seller, secretary and



treasurer, at thirty dollars a month and one-fifth of the entire profits, while Vivalla was to receive a salary of fifty dollars. As I was already paying him eighty dollars a month, our joint salaries reimbursed me and left me the chance of twenty per cent. of the net receipts. We started from Danbury for West Springfield, Massachusetts, April 26th, and on the first day, instead of halting to dine, as I expected, Mr. Turner regaled the whole company with three loaves of rye bread and a pound of butter, bought at a farm house at a cost of fifty cents; and after watering the horses, we went on our way.

We began our performances at West Springfield, April 28th, and as our expected band of music had not arrived from Providence, I made a prefatory speech announcing our disappointment, and our intention to please our patrons, nevertheless. The two Turner boys, sons of the proprietor rode finely; Joe Pentland, one of the wittiest, best, and most original of clowns, with Vivalla's tricks and other performances in the ring, more than made up for the lack of music. In a day or two our band arrived and our "houses" improved. My diary is full of incidents of our summer tour through numerous villages, towns, and cities in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, and North Carolina.

While we were at Cabotville, Massachusetts, on going to bed one night one of my room-mates threw a lighted stump of a cigar into a spit-box filled with sawdust, and the result was that about one o'clock T. V. Turner, who slept in the room, awoke in the midst of a dense smoke, and barely managed to crawl to the window to open it, and to awaken us in time to save us from suffocation.

At Lenox, Massachusetts, one Sunday I attended church as usual, and the preacher denounced our circus and all connected with it as immoral, and was very abusive; whereupon, when he had read the closing hymn, I walked up the pulpit stairs and handed him a written request signed "P. T. Barnum, connected with the circus, June 5th, 1836," to be permitted to reply to him. He declined to notice it; and after the benediction I lectured him for not giving me an opportunity to vindicate myself and those with whom I was



connected. The affair created considerable excitement, and some of the members of the church apologized to me for their clergyman's ill-behaviour. A similar affair happened afterwards at Port Deposit, on the Lower Susquehanna, and in this instance I addressed the audience for half an hour, defending the circus company against the attacks of the clergyman; and the people listened, though their pastor repeatedly implored them to go home. Often have I collected our company on Sunday and read to them the Bible or a printed sermon, and one or more of the men frequently accompanied me to church. We made no pretence of religion, but we were not the worst people in the world, and we thought ourselves entitled to at least decent treatment when we went to hear the preaching of the Gospel.

The proprietor of the circus, Aaron Turner, was a self-made man, who had acquired a large fortune by his industry. He believed that any man with health and common sense could become rich if he only resolved to be so, and he was very proud of the fact that he began the world with no advantages, no education, and without a shilling. Withal, he was a practical joker, as I more than once discovered to my cost. While we were at Annapolis, Maryland, he played a trick upon me which was fun to him, but was nearly death to me.

We arrived on Saturday night, and as I felt quite "flush," I bought a fine suit of black clothes. On Sunday morning I dressed myself in my new suit and started out for a stroll. While passing through the bar-room, Turner called the attention of the company to me, and said:

"I think it very singular you permit that rascal to march your streets in open day. It wouldn't be allowed in Rhode Island, and I suppose that is the reason the black-coated scoundrel has come down this way."

"Why, who is he!" asked half a dozen at once.

"Don't you know! Why that is the Rev. E. K. Avery, the murderer of Miss Cornell!"

"Is it possible!" they exclaimed, all starting for the door, eager to get a look at me, and swearing vengeance.

It was only recently that the Rev. Ephraim K. Avery had been tried in Rhode Island for the murder of Miss Cornell,



whose body was discovered in a stack-yard, and though Avery was acquitted in court, the general sentiment of the country condemned him. It was this Avery whom Turner made me represent. I had not walked far in my fine clothes before I was overtaken by a mob of a dozen, which rapidly increased to at least a hundred, and my ears were suddenly saluted with such observations as, "the lecherous old hypocrite," "the sanctified murderer," the black-coated villain," "lynch the scoundrel," "let's tar and feather him," and like remarks which I had no idea applied to me till one man seized me by the collar, while five or six more appeared on the scene with a rail.

"Come" said the man who collared me, "old chap, you can't walk any further! we know you, and as we always make gentlemen ride in these parts, you may just prepare to straddle that rail!"

My surprise may be imagined. "Good heavens!" I exclaimed, "as they all pressed around me, gentlemen, what have I done!"

"Oh we know you," exclaimed half a dozen voices "you needn't roll your sanctimonious eyes; that game don't take in this country. Come, straddle the rail, and *remember the stack-yard!*"

I grew more and more bewildered; I could not imagine what possible offence I was to suffer for, and I continued to exclaim, "Gentlemen what have I done! Don't kill me, Gentlemen, but tell me what I have done."

"Come make him straddle the rail; we'll show him how to hang poor factory girls," shouted a man in the crowd.

The man who had me by the collar then remarked, "come, *Mr. Avery*, it's no use, you see, we know you, and we'll give you a touch of Lynch law, and start you for home again."

"My name is *not* Avery, gentlemen; you are mistaken in your man," I exclaimed.

"Come, come, none of your gammon; straddle the rail, Ephraim."

The rail was brought and I was about to be placed on it, when the truth flashed upon me.

Gentlemen, 'I, I exclaimed, "I am not Avery; I despise that



villain as much as you can ; my name is Barnum ; I belong to the circus which arrived here last night, and I am sure Old Turner, my partner, has hoaxed you with this ridiculous story."

"If he has we'll lynch him," said one of the mob.

"Well, he has, I assure you, and if you will walk to the hotel with me, I'll convince you of the fact."

This they reluctantly assented to, keeping however, a close hand upon me. As we walked up the main street, the mob received a reinforcement of some fifty or sixty, and I was marched like a malefactor up to the hotel. Old Turner stood on the piazza ready to explode with laughter. I appealed to him for heaven's sake to explain this matter, that I might be liberated. He continued to laugh, but finally told them "he believed there was some mistake about it. The fact is," said he, "my friend Barnum has a new suit of black clothes on, and he looks so much like a priest that I thought he must be Avery.

The crowd saw the joke and seemed satisfied. My new coat had been half torn from my back, and I had been very roughly handled. But some of the crowd apologised for the outrage, declaring that Turner ought to be served in the same way ; while others advised me to get even with him. I was very much offended, and when the mob dispersed I asked Turner what could have induced him to play such a trick upon me.

"My dear Mr. Barnum," he replied, "it was all for our good. Remember, all we need to insure success is notoriety. You will see that this will be noised all about town as a trick played by one of the circus managers upon the other, and our pavilion will be crammed to-morrow night."

It was even so ; the trick was told all over town and everyone came to see the circus managers who were in a habit of playing practical jokes upon each other. We had fine audiences while we remained in Annapolis ; but it was a long time before I forgave Turner for his rascally "joke."



## CHAPTER VI.

## MY FIRST TRAVELLING COMPANY.

AN amusing incident occurred when we were at Hanover Court House, in Virginia. It rained so heavily that we could not perform there, and Turner decided to start for Richmond immediately after dinner, when he was informed by the landlord that as our agent had engaged three meals and lodging for the whole company, the entire bill must be paid whether we went then or next morning. No compromise could be effected with the stubborn landlord, and so Turner proceeded to get the worth of his money as follows :

He ordered dinner at twelve o'clock, which was duly prepared and eaten. The table was cleared and re-set for supper at half-past twelve. At one o'clock we all went to bed, every man carrying a lighted candle to his room. There were thirty-six of us, and we all undressed and tumbled into bed as if we were going to stay all night. In half an hour we rose and went down to the hot breakfast which Turner had demanded, and which we found smoking on the table. Turner was very grave, the landlord was exceedingly angry, and the rest of us were convulsed with laughter at the absurdity of the whole proceeding. We disposed of our breakfast as if we had eaten nothing for ten hours, and then started for Richmond with the satisfaction that we had fairly settled with our unreasonable landlord.

We went from Richmond to Petersburg, and from that place to Warrenton, North Carolina, where, October 30th, my engagement expired with a profit to myself of \$1,200. I now separated from the circus company, taking Vivalla, James Sanford (a negro singer and dancer), several musicians, horses, waggons, and a small canvas tent with which I intended to begin a travelling exhibition of my own. My company started and Turner took me on the way in his own carriage some



twenty miles. We parted reluctantly, and my friend wished me every success in my new venture.

On Saturday, November 12, 1836, we halted at Rocky Mount Falls, North Carolina, and on my way to the Baptist Church, Sunday morning, I noticed a stand and benches in a grove near by, and determined to speak to the people if I was permitted. The landlord, who was with me, said that the congregation, coming from a distance to attend a single service, would be very glad to hear a stranger, and I accordingly asked the venerable clergyman to announce that after service, I would speak for half an hour in the grove. Learning that I was not a clergyman, he declined to give the notice, but said that he had no objection to my making the announcement, which I did, and the congregation, numbering about three hundred, promptly came to hear me.

I told them I was not a preacher, and had very little experience in public speaking; but I felt a deep interest in matters of morality and religion, and would attempt in a plain way, to set before them the duties and privileges of man. I appealed to every man's experience, observation and reason, to confirm the Bible doctrine of wretchedness in vice and happiness in virtue. We cannot violate the laws of God with impunity, and he will not keep back the wages of well-doing. The outside show of things is of very small account. We must look to realities and not to appearances. "Diamonds may glitter on a vicious breast," but "the soul's calm sunshine and the heart-felt joy is virtue's prize." The rogue, the passionate man, the drunkard are not to be envied even at the best; and a conscience hardened by sin is the most sorrowful possession we can think of. I went on in this way, with some Scriptural quotations and familiar illustrations for three quarters of an hour. At the close of my address several persons took me by the hand, expressing themselves as greatly pleased and desiring to know my name; and I went away with the feeling that I possibly might have done some good in the beautiful grove on that charming Sunday morning.

When we were at Camden, South Carolina, Sanford suddenly left me, and as I had advertised Negro songs, and none of my company was competent to fill Sanford's place, not to



disappoint my audience, I blacked myself and sang the advertised songs—"Zip Coon," etc., and to my surprise was much applauded, while two of the songs were encored. One evening, after singing my songs, I heard a disturbance outside the tent, and going to the spot, found a person disputing with my men. I took part on the side of the men, when the person who was quarrelling with them drew a pistol and exclaiming: "You black scoundrel! how dare you use such language to a white man," he proceeded to cock it. I saw that he thought I was a negro and meant to blow my brains out. Quick as thought I rolled my sleeve up, and showed my skin, and said, "I am as white as you are, sir." He dropped his pistol in positive fright, and begged my pardon. My presence of mind saved me.

On four different occasions in my life I have had a loaded pistol pointed at my head, and each time I have escaped death by what seemed a miracle. I have also often been in deadly peril by accidents, and when I think of these things I realise my indebtedness to an all-protecting Providence. Reviewing my career, too, and considering the kind of company I kept for years, and the associations with which I was surrounded and connected, I am surprised as well as grateful that I was not ruined. I honestly believe that I owe my preservation from the degradation of living and dying a loafer and a vagabond, to the single fact that I was never addicted to strong drink. To be sure, I have in times past drunk liquor, but I have generally wholly abstained from intoxicating beverages, and for more than thirty years past, I am glad to say, I have been a strict "teetotaler."

I bought four horses and two waggons, and hired Joe Pentland and Robert White to join my company. White, as a negro singer, would relieve me from that roll: and Pentland, besides being a capital clown, was celebrated as a ventriloquist, comic singer, balancer, and legerdemain performer. My reinforced exhibition was called "Barnum's Grand Scientific and Musical Theatre."

In going from Columbus, Georgia, to Montgomery, Alabama, we were obliged to cross a thinly-settled, desolate tract, known as the "Indian Nation," and, as several persons had



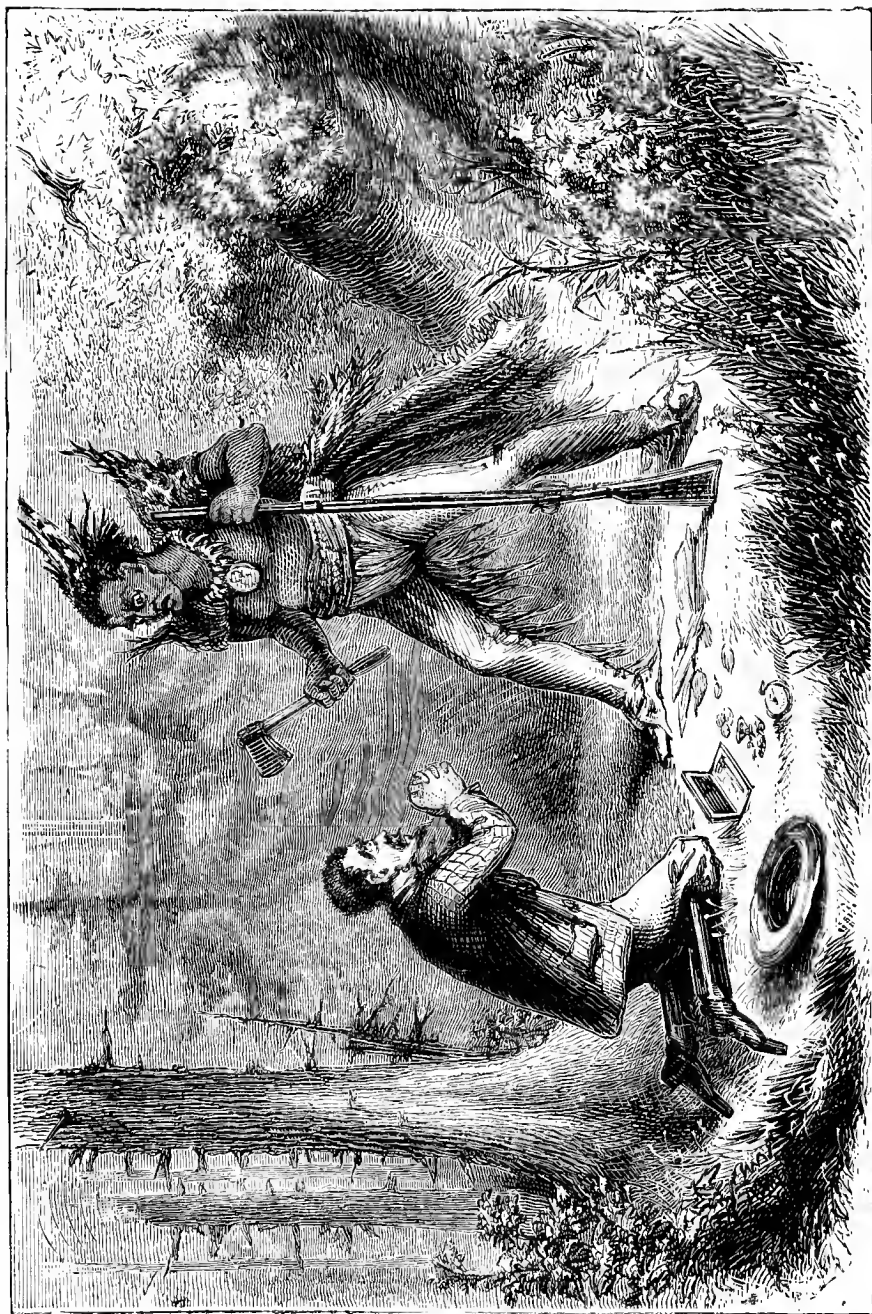
been murdered by hostile Indians in that region, it was deemed dangerous to travel the road without an escort. Only the day before we started, the mail stage had been stopped, and the passengers murdered, the driver alone escaping. We were well armed, however, and trusted that our number would present too formidable a force to be attacked, though we dreaded to incur the risk. Vivalla alone was fearless, and was ready to encounter fifty Indians and drive them into the swamp.

Accordingly, when we had safely passed over the entire route to within fourteen miles of Montgomery, and were beyond the reach of danger, Joe Pentland determined to test Vivalla's bravery. He had secretly purchased at Mount Meg, on the way, an old Indian dress, with a fringed hunting shirt and mocassins, and these he put on, after colouring his face with Spanish brown. Then, shouldering his musket, he followed Vivalla and the party, and, approaching stealthily, leaped into their midst with a tremendous whoop.

Vivalla's companions were in the secret, and they instantly fled in all directions. Vivalla himself ran like a deer, and Pentland after him, gun in hand, and yelling horribly. After running a full mile, the poor little Italian, out of breath and frightened nearly to death, dropped on his knees and begged for his life. The "Indian" levelled his gun at his victim, but soon seemed to relent, and signified that Vivalla should turn his pockets inside out—which he did, producing and handing over a purse containing eleven dollars. The savage then marched Vivalla to an oak, and with a handkerchief tied him in the most approved Indian manner to the tree, leaving him half dead with fright.

Pentland then joined us, and, washing his face and changing his dress, we all went to the relief of Vivalla. He was overjoyed to see us, and when he was released his courage returned. He swore that after his companions had left him, the Indian had been reinforced by six more, to whom, in default of a gun or other means to defend himself, Vivalla had been compelled to surrender. We pretended to believe his story for a week, and then told him the joke, which he refused to credit, and also declined to take the money which Pentland





THE COWARD AND THE "BRAVE."



offered to return, as it could not possibly be his, since seven Indians had taken his money.

We arrived at Montgomery, February 27, 1837. Here I met Henry Hawley, a legerdemain performer, and I sold him one half of my exhibition. He had a ready wit, a happy way of localising his tricks, was very popular in that part of the country, where he had been performing for several years, and I never saw him nonplussed but once. This was when he was performing on one occasion the well-known egg and bag trick, which he did with his usual success, producing egg after egg from the bag, and finally breaking one to show that they were genuine. "Now," said Hawley, "I will show you the old hen that laid them." It happened, however, that the negro boy to whom had been entrusted the duty of supplying the bag had made a slight mistake, which was manifest when Hawley triumphantly produced, not "the old hen that laid the eggs," but a rooster! The whole audience was convulsed with laughter, and the abashed Hawley retreated to the dressing-room, cursing the stupidity of the black boy, who had been paid to put a hen in the bag.

After performing in different places in Alabama, Kentucky, and Tennessee, we disbanded at Nashville in May, 1837, Vivalla going to New York, where he performed on his own account for awhile, previous to sailing for Cuba, Hawley staying in Tennessee to look after our horses which had been turned out to grass, and I returning home to spend a few weeks with my family.

Early in July, returning west with a new company of performers, I rejoined Hawley, and we began our campaign in Kentucky. We were not successful; one of our small company was incompetent; another was intemperate—both were dismissed; and our Negro singer was drowned in the river at Frankfort. Funds were low, and I was obliged to leave pledges here and there, in payment for bills, which I afterwards redeemed. Hawley and I dissolved in August; and making a new partnership with Z. Graves, I left him in charge of the establishment, and went to Tiffin, Ohio, where I re-engaged Joc Pentland, buying his horses and waggon, and taking him, with several musicians, to Kentucky.



During my short stay at Tiffin, a religious conversation at the hotel introduced me to several gentlemen, who requested me to lecture on the subjects we had discussed, and I did so to a crowded audience in the school-house Sunday afternoon and evening. At the solicitation of a gentleman from Republic, I also delivered two lectures in that town, on the evenings of September 4th and 5th.

On our way to Kentucky, just before we reached Cincinnati, we met a drove of hogs, and one of the drivers making an insolent remark because our waggons interfered with his swine, I replied in the same vein; when he dismounted, and, pointing a pistol at my breast, swore he would shoot me if I did not apologise. I begged him to permit me to consult a friend in the next waggon, and the misunderstanding should be satisfactorily settled. My friend was a loaded double-barrelled gun, which I pointed at him and said:

"Now, sir, *you* must apologise, for your brains are in danger. You drew a weapon upon me for a trivial remark. You seem to hold human life at a cheap price; and now, sir, you have the choice between a load of shot and an apology.

This led to an apology and a friendly conversation, in which we both agreed that many a life is sacrificed in sudden anger, because one or both of the contending parties carry deadly weapons.

In our subsequent southern tour we exhibited at Nashville (where I visited General Jackson, at the Hermitage), Huntsville, Tuscaloosa, Vicksburg, and intermediate places, doing tolerably well. At Vicksburg we sold all our land conveyances excepting the band waggon and four horses, bought the steamboat "*Ceres*," for six thousand dollars, hired the captain and crew, and started down the river to exhibit at places on the way. At Natchez our cook left us, and in the search for another I found a white widow who would go, only she expected to marry a painter. I called on the painter, who had not made up his mind whether to marry the widow or not, but I told him if he would marry her the next morning, I would hire her at twenty-five dollars a month as cook, employ him at the same wages as painter, with board for both, and a cash bonus of fifty dollars. There was a wedding



on board the next day, and we had a good cook and a good dinner.

During one of our evening performances, at Francisville, Louisiana, a man tried to pass me at the door of the tent, claiming that he had paid for admittance. I refused him entrance; and as he was slightly intoxicated, he struck me with a slung-shot, smashing my hat and grazing what phrenologists call "the organ of caution." He went away and soon returned with a gang of armed and half-drunken companions, who ordered us to pack up our "traps and plunder" and to get on board our steamboat within an hour. The big tent speedily came down. No one was permitted to help us, but the company worked with a will, and within five minutes of the expiration of the hour we were on board and ready to leave. The scamps who had caused our departure escorted us and our last load, waving pine torches, and saluted us with a hurrah as we swung into the stream.

The New Orleans papers of March 19, 1838, announced the arrival of the "Steamer Ceres, Captain Barnum, with a theatrical company." After a week's performances, we started for the Attakapas country. At Opelousas we exchanged the steamer for sugar and molasses; our company was disbanded, and I started for home, arriving in New York, June 4, 1838.





## CHAPTER VII.

## AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER.

LONGING now for some permanent, respectable business, I advertised for a partner, stating that I had \$2,500 to invest, and would add my unremitting personal attention to the capital and the business. This advertisement gave me altogether a new insight into human nature. Whoever wishes to know how some people live, or want to live, let him advertise for a partner, at the same time stating that he has a large or small capital to invest. I was flooded with answers to my advertisements and received no less than ninety-three different propositions for the use of my capital. Of these, at least one-third were from porter-house keepers. Brokers, pawn-brokers, lottery-policy dealers, patent medicine men, inventors and others also made application. Some of my correspondents declined to specifically state the nature of their business, but they promised to open the door to untold wealth.

I had interviews with some of these mysterious million-makers. One of them was a counterfeiter, who, after much hesitation and pledges of secrecy, showed me some counterfeit coin and bank notes; he wanted \$2,500 to purchase paper and ink and to prepare new dies, and he actually proposed that I should join him in the business which promised, he declared, a safe and rich harvest. Another sedate individual, dressed in Quaker costume, wanted me to join him in an oat speculation. By buying a horse and waggon, and by selling oats, bought at wholesale, in bags, he thought a good business could be done, especially as people would not be particular to measure after a Quaker.

"Do you mean to cheat in measuring your oats?" I asked.

"Oh, I should probably make them hold out," he answered, with a leer.

One application came from a Pearl street wool merchant,



who failed a month afterwards. Then came a "perpetual motion" man, who had a fortune making machine, in which I discovered a main-spring slyly hid in a hollow post, the spring making perpetual motion—till it ran down. Finally I went into partnership with a German, named Proler, who was a manufacturer of paste-blackening, water-proof paste for leather, Cologne water and bear's grease. We took the store No. 101 1-2 Bowery, at a rent (including the dwelling) of \$600 per annum, and opened a large manufactory of the above articles. Proler manufactured and sold the goods at wholesale in Boston, Charleston, Cleveland, and various other parts of the country. I kept the accounts and attended to sales in the store, wholesale and retail. For awhile the business seemed to prosper—at least till my capital was absorbed and notes for stock began to fall due, with nothing to meet them, since we had sold our goods on long credits. In January 1840, I dissolved partnership with Proler, he buying the entire interest for \$2,600, on credit, and then running away to Rotterdam without paying his note, and leaving me nothing but a few receipts. Proler was a good-looking, plausible, promising—scamp.

During my connection with Proler, I became acquainted with a remarkable young dancer named John Diamond, one of the first and best of the numerous Negro and "break-down" dancers who have since surprised and amused the public, and I entered into an engagement with his father for his services, putting Diamond in the hands of an agent, as I did not wish to appear in the transaction. In the spring of 1840 I hired and opened the Vauxhall Garden saloon, in New York, and gave a variety of performances, including singing, dancing, Yankee stories, &c. In this saloon Miss Mary Taylor, afterwards so celebrated as an actress and singer, made her first appearance on the stage. The enterprise, however, did not meet my expectations, and I relinquished it in August.

What was to be done next? I dreaded resuming the life of an itinerant showman, but funds were low, I had a family to care for: and as nothing better presented, I made up my mind to endure the vexations and uncertainties of a



tour in the West and South. I collected a company, consisting of Mr. C. D. Jenkins, an excellent singer and delineator of Yankee and other characters: Master John Diamond, the dancer; Francis Lynch, an orphan vagabond fourteen years old, whom I picked up at Troy, and a fiddler. My brother-in-law, Mr. John Hallett, preceded us as agent and advertiser, and our route passed through Buffalo, Toronto, Detroit, Chicago, Ottawa, Springfield, the intermediate places, and St. Louis, where I took the steamboat for New Orleans, with a company reduced by desertions to Master Diamond and the fiddler.

Arriving in New Orleans, January 2nd, 1841, I had but 100 dollars in my purse, and I had started from New York four months before with quite as much in my pocket. Excepting some small remittances to my family, I had made nothing more than current expenses; and when I had been in New Orleans a fortnight, funds were so low that I was obliged to pledge my watch as security for my board bill. But on the 16th I received from the St. Charles Theatre 500 dollars as my half share of Diamond's benefit; the next night I had 50 dollars; and the third night 479 dollars was my share of the proceeds of a grand dancing match at the theatre between Diamond and a Negro dancer from Kentucky. Subsequent engagements at Vicksburg and Jackson were not so successful, but, returning to New Orleans, we again succeeded admirably, and afterwards at Mobile. Diamond, however, after extorting considerable sums of money from me, finally ran away, and, March 12th, I started homeward by way of the Mississippi and the Ohio.

At Pittsburgh, where I arrived March 30th, I learned that Jenkins, who had enticed Francis Lynch away from me at St. Louis, was exhibiting him at the Museum under the name of "Master Diamond," and, visiting the performance, the next day I wrote Jenkins an ironical review, for which he threatened suit; and he actually instigated R. W. Lindsay, from whom I hired Joice Heth in Philadelphia in 1835, and whom I had not seen since, though he was then residing in Pittsburgh, to sue me for a pipe of brandy which, it was pretended, was promised in addition to the money paid him. I was required to give



bonds of 500 dollars, which, as I was among strangers, I could not immediately procure, and I was accordingly thrown into jail till four o'clock in the afternoon, when I was liberated. The next day I caused the arrest of Jenkins for trespass in assuming Master Diamond's name and reputation for Master Lynch, and he was sent to jail till four o'clock in the afternoon. Each having had his turn at this amusement, we adjourned our controversy to New York, where I beat him. As for Lindsay, I heard nothing more of his claim or him till twelve years afterwards, when he called on me in Boston with an apology. He was very poor, and I was highly prosperous, and I may add that Lindsay did not lack a friend.

I arrived in New York April 23rd, 1841, after an absence of eight months, resolved once more that I would never again be an itinerant showman. Three days afterwards I contracted with Robert Sears, the publisher, for 500 copies of "Sears's Pictorial Illustrations of the Bible," at 500 dollars, and, accepting the United States agency, I opened an office, May 10th, at the corner of Beekman and Nassau Streets, the site of the present Nassau Bank. I had had a limited experience with that book in this way. When I was in Pittsburgh, an acquaintance, Mr. C. D. Harker, was complaining that he had nothing to do, when I picked up a New York paper and saw the advertisement of "Sears's Pictorial Illustrations of the Bible, price two dollars a copy." Mr. Harker thought he could get subscribers, and I bought him a specimen copy, agreeing to furnish him with as many as he wanted at \$1.37 1-2 a copy, though I had never before seen the work, and did not know the wholesale price. The result was that he obtained eighty subscribers in two days, and made fifty dollars. My own venture in the work was not so successful; I advertised largely, had plenty of agents, and in six months sold thousands of copies; but irresponsible agents used up all my profits and my capital.

While engaged in this business I once more leased Vauxhall saloon, opening it June 14th, 1841, employing Mr. John Hallett, my brother-in-law, as manager under my direction, and at the close of the season, September 25th, we had cleared about two hundred dollars. This sum was soon exhausted,



and, with my family on my hands and no employment, I was glad to do anything that would keep the wolf from the door. I wrote advertisements and notices for the Bowery Amphitheatre, receiving for the service four dollars a week, which I was very glad to get, and I also wrote articles for the Sunday papers, deriving a fair remuneration and managing to get a living. But I was at the bottom round of fortune's ladder, my cheerfulness and self-confidence remained, and I resolved to live no longer from hand to mouth, but to concentrate my energies upon laying up something for the future.

While I was forming this practical determination, I was much nearer to its realization than my most sanguine hopes could have predicted. The road to fortune was close by.

As outside clerk for the Bowery Amphitheatre I had casually learned that the collection of curiosities comprising Scudder's American Museum, at the corner of Broadway and Ann Street, was for sale.

It had cost its founder Mr. Scudder, probably fifty thousand dollars, and from the profits of the establishment he had been able to leave a large competency to his children. The Museum, however, had been for several years a losing concern, and the heirs were anxious to sell it. Looking at this property, I thought I saw that energy, tact and liberality, were only needed to make it a paying institution, and I determined to purchase it if possible.

"You buy the American Museum!" said a friend, who knew the state of my funds; "what do you intend buying it with!"

"Brass," I replied, "for silver and gold have I none."

The Museum building belonged to Mr. Francis W. Olmsted, a retired merchant, to whom I wrote stating my desire to buy the collection, and that although I had no means, if it could be purchased upon reasonable credit, I was confident that my tact and experience, added to a determined devotion to business, would enable me to make the payments when due. I therefore asked him to purchase the collection in his own name; to give me a writing securing it to me, provided I made the payments punctually, including the rent of his building; to allow me twelve dollars and a half a week on which to support my family; and it at any time I failed to meet the



instalment due, I would vacate the premises, and forfeit all that might have been paid to that date. "In fact, Mr. Olmsted," I continued, in my earnestness, "you may bind me in any way, and as tightly as you please—only give me a chance to "dig out," or scratch out, and I will do so or forfeit all the labour and trouble I may have incurred.

In reply to this letter, he named an hour when I could call on him, and as I was there at the exact moment, he expressed himself pleased with my punctuality. He enquired closely as to my habits and antecedents, and I frankly narrated my experiences as a caterer for the public, mentioning my amusement ventures in Vauxhall Garden, the circus, and in the exhibitions I had managed at the South and West.

"Who are your references!" he enquired.

"Any man in my line," I replied, "from Edmund Simpson, manager of the Park Theatre, or Willaim Niblo, to Messrs. Welch, June, Titus, Turner, Angervine or other circus or menagerie proprietors; also Moses Y. Beach, of the *New York Sun*."

"Can you get any of them to call on me?" he continued.

I told him that I could, and the next day my friend Niblo rode down and had an interview with Mr. Olmsted, while Mr. Beach and several other gentlemen also called, and the following morning I waited upon him for his decision.

"I don't like your references, Mr. Barnum," said Mr Olmsted, abruptly, as soon as I entered the room.

I was confused, and said I regretted to hear it.

"They all speak too well of you," he added, laughing; "In fact they all talk as if they were partners of yours, and intended to share the profits."

He then asked me what security I could offer in case he concluded to make the purchase for me, and it was finally agreed that, if he should do so, he should retain the property till it was entirely paid for, and should also appoint a ticket-taker and accountant (at my expense), who should render him a weekly statement. I was further to take an apartment hitherto used as a billiard room in an adjoining building, allowing him therefor \$500 a year, making a total rental of \$3,000 per annum, on a lease of ten years. He then told me to



see the administrator and heirs of the estate, to get their best terms, and to meet him on his return to town, a week from that time.

I at once saw Mr. John Heath, the administrator, and his price was \$15,000. I offered \$10,000, payable in seven annual instalments, with good security. After several interviews, it was finally agreed that I should have it for \$12,000, payable as above—possession to be given on the 15th of November. Mr. Olmsted assented to this, and a morning was appointed to draw and sign the writings. Mr. Heath appeared, but said he must decline proceeding any further in my case, as he had sold the collection to the directors of Peale's Museum (an incorporated institution) for \$15,000, and had received \$1,000 in advance.

I was shocked, and appealed to Mr. Heath's honour. He said that he had signed no writing with me; was in no way legally bound, and that it was his duty to do the best he could for the heirs. Mr. Olmsted was sorry, but could not help me; the new tenants would not require him to incur any risk, and my matter was at an end.

I immediately informed myself as to the character of Peale's Museum company. It proved to be a band of speculators who had bought Peale's collection for a few thousand dollars, expecting to join the American Museum with it, issue and sell stock to the amount of \$50,000, pocket \$30,000 profits, and permit the stockholders to look out for themselves.

I went immediately to several of the editors, including Major M. M. Noah, M. Y. Beach, my good friends West Herrick and Ropes, of the *Atlas*, and others, and stated my grievances. "Now," said I, "if you will grant me the use of your columns, I'll blow that speculation sky-high." They all consented, and I wrote a large number of squibs, cautioning the public against buying the Museum stock, ridiculing the idea of a board of broken-down bank-directors engaging in the exhibition of stuffed monkeys and gander-skins; appealing to the case of the Zoological Institute, which had failed by adopting such a plan as the one now proposed; and finally, I told the public that such a speculation would be infinitely more ridiculous than Dickens' "Grand United Metropolitan Hot



Muffin and Crumpet-baking and Punctual Delivery Company."

The stock was as "dead as a herring!" I then went to Mr. Heath and asked him when the directors were to pay the other \$14,000. "On the 26th day of December, or forfeit the \$1,000 already paid," was the reply. I assured him that they would never pay it, that they could not raise it, **and** that he would ultimately find himself with the Museum collection on his hands, and if once I started off with an exhibition for the South, I would not touch the Museum at any price. "Now," said I, "if you will agree with me confidentially, that in case these gentlemen do not pay you, on the 26th of December, I may have it on the 27th for \$12,000, I will run the risk, and wait in this city until that date." He readily agreed to the proposition, **but** said he was sure they would not forfeit their \$1,000.

"Very well," said I; "all I ask of you is, that this arrangement shall not be mentioned." He assented. "On the 27th day of December, at ten o'clock A.M., I wish you to meet me in Mr. Olmsted's apartments, prepared to sign the writings, provided this incorporated company do not pay you \$14,000 on the 26th." He agreed to this, and by my request put it in writing.

From that moment I felt that the Museum was mine. I saw Mr. Olmsted, and told him so. He promised secrecy, and agreed to sign the document if the other parties did not meet their engagement.

This was about November 15th, and I continued my shower of newspaper squibs at the new company, which could not sell a dollar's worth of its stock. Meanwhile, if anyone spoke to me about the Museum, I simply replied that I had lost it.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE AMERICAN MUSEUM.

My newspaper squib war against the Peale combination was vigorously kept up; when one morning, about the first of December, I received a letter from the secretary of that company (now calling itself the "New York Museum Company,") requesting me to meet the directors at the Museum on the following Monday morning. I went, and found the directors in session. The venerable president of the board, who was also the ex-president of a broken bank, blandly proposed to hire me to manage the united museums; and though I saw that he merely meant to buy my silence, I professed to entertain the proposition, and in reply to an inquiry as to what salary I should expect, I specified the sum of \$3,000 a year. This was at once acceded to, the salary to begin January 1, 1842; and after complimenting me on my ability, the president remarked: "Of course, Mr. Barnum, we shall have no more of your squibs through the newspapers"—to which I replied that I should "ever try to serve the interests of my employers," and I took my leave.

It was as clear to me as noonday that after buying my silence, so as to appreciate their stock, these directors meant to sell out to whom they could, leaving me to look to future stockholders for my salary. They thought, no doubt, that they had nicely entrapped me, but I knew I had caught them.

For, supposing me to be out of the way, and having no other rival purchaser, these directors postponed the advertisement of their stock to give people time to forget the attacks I had made on it, and they also took their own time for paying the money promised to Mr. Heath December 26th—indeed, they did not even call on him at the appointed time. But on the following morning, as agreed, I was promptly and hopefully at Mr. Olmsted's apartments, with my



legal adviser, at half-past nine o'clock; Mr. Heath came with his lawyer at ten, and before two o'clock that day I was in formal possession of the American Museum. My first managerial act was to write and despatch the following complimentary note:

AMERICAN MUSEUM, NEW YORK, Dec. 27. 1841.

*To the President and Directors of the New York Museum:*

GENTLEMEN.—It gives me great pleasure to inform you that you are placed upon the Free List of this establishment until further notice.

P. T. BARNUM, *Proprietor*.

It is unnecessary to say that the "President of the New Museum" was astounded, and when he called upon Mr. Heath, and learned that I had bought and was really in possession of the American Museum, he was indignant. He talked of prosecution, and demanded the \$1,000 paid on his agreement, but he did not prosecute, and he justly forfeited his deposit money.

And now that I was proprietor and manager of the American Museum, I had reached a new epoch in my career, which I felt was the beginning of better days, though the full significance of this important step I did not see. I was still in the show business, but in a settled, substantial phase of it, that invited industry and enterprise, and called for ever earnest and ever heroic endeavour. Whether I should sink or swim, depended wholly upon my own energy. I must pay for the establishment within a stipulated time, or forfeit it with whatever I had paid on account. I meant to make it my own; and brains, hands and every effort were devoted to the interests of the Museum.

The nucleus of this establishment, Scudder's Museum, was formed in 1810, the year in which I was born. It was begun in Chatham street, and was afterwards transferred to the old City Hall, and from small beginnings, by purchases, and to a considerable degree by presents, it had grown to be a large and valuable collection.

Valuable as the collection was when I bought it, it was only the beginning of the American Museum as I made it. In my long proprietorship, I considerably more than doubled the



permanent attractions and curiosities of the establishment. In 1842, I bought and added to my collection the entire contents of Peale's Museum; in 1850, I purchased the large Peale collection in Philadelphia; and year after year, I bought genuine curiosities, regardless of cost, wherever I could find them in Europe or America.

At the very outset, I was determined to deserve success. My plan of economy included the intention to support my family in New York on \$600 a year, and my treasure of a wife, not only gladly assented, but was willing to reduce the sum to \$400, if necessary. Some six months after I had bought the Museum, Mr. Olmsted happened to come into my ticket-office at noon, and found me eating a frugal dinner of cold corned beef and bread, which I had brought from home.

"Is this the way you eat your dinner?" he asked.

"I have not eaten a warm dinner, except on Sundays," I replied, "since I bought the Museum, and I never intend to, on a week-day, till I am out of debt."

"Ah!" said he, clapping me on the shoulder, "you are safe, and will pay for the Museum before the year is out."

And he was right, for within twelve months I was in full possession of the property as my own, and it was entirely paid for from the profits of the business.

In 1865, the space occupied for my Museum purposes was more than double what it was in 1842. The Lecture Room, originally narrow, ill-contrived and inconvenient, was so enlarged and improved that it became one of the most commodious and beautiful amusement halls in the city of New York. At first my attractions and inducements were merely the collection of curiosities by day, and an evening entertainment, consisting of such variety performances as were current in ordinary shows. Then Saturday afternoons, and soon afterwards, Wednesday afternoons were devoted to entertainments, and the popularity of the Museum grew so rapidly that I presently found it expedient and profitable to open the great Lecture Room every afternoon, as well as every evening, on every week-day in the year. The first experiments in this direction, more than justified my expectations, for the day exhibitions were always more thronged than those of the



evening. Of course I made the most of the holidays, advertising extensively and presenting extra inducements. On great holidays I gave as many as twelve performances to as many different audiences.

By degrees the character of the stage performances was changed. The transient attractions of the Museum were constantly diversified, and educated dogs, industrious fleas, automatons, jugglers, ventriloquists, living statuary, tableaux, gipsies, Albinoes, fat boys, giants, dwarfs, rope-dancers, live "Yankees," pantomime, instrumental music, singing and dancing in great variety, dioramas, panoramas, models of Niagara, Dublin, Paris, and Jerusalem; Hanington's dioramas of the Creation, the Deluge, Fairy Grotto, Storm at Sea; the first English Punch and Judy in this country, Italian Fantocchini, mechanical figures, fancy glass-blowing, knitting machines and other triumphs in the mechanical arts; dissolving views, American Indians, who enacted their warlike and religious ceremonies on the stage,—these, among others, were all exceedingly successful.

I thoroughly understood the art of advertising, not merely by means of printers' ink, which I have always used freely, and to which I confess myself so much indebted for my success, but by turning every possible circumstance to my account.

As an illustration: one morning, a stout, hearty-looking man came into my ticket-office and begged some money. I asked him why he did not work and earn his living? He replied that he could get nothing to do, and that he would be glad of any job at a dollar a day. I handed him a quarter of a dollar, told him to go and get his breakfast and return, and I would employ him, at light labour, at a dollar and a half a day. When he returned, I gave him five common bricks.

"Now," said I, "go and lay a brick on the sidewalk, at the corner of Broadway and Ann Street; another close by the Museum; a third diagonally across the way, at the corner of Broadway and Vesey Street, by the Astor House; put down the fourth on the sidewalk, in front of St. Paul's church, opposite; then, with the fifth brick in hand, take up a rapid march from one point to the other, making the circuit, ex-



changing your brick at every point, and say nothing to anyone."

"What is the object of this," inquired the man.

"No matter," I replied; "all you need to know is that it brings you fifteen cents wages per hour. It is a bit of my fun, and to assist me properly you must seem to be as deaf as a post; wear a serious countenance; answer no questions; pay no attention to anyone; but attend faithfully to the work, and at the end of every hour, by St. Paul's clock, show this ticket at the Museum door; enter, walking solemnly through every hall in the building; pass out, and resume your work."

With the remark that it was "all one to him, so long as he could earn his living," the man placed his bricks, and began his round. Half an hour afterwards, at least five hundred people were watching his mysterious movements. He had assumed a military step and bearing, and, looking as sober as a judge, he made no response whatever to the constant inquiries as to the object of his singular conduct. At the end of the first hour, the sidewalks in the vicinity were packed with people, all anxious to solve the mystery. The man, as directed, then went into the Museum, devoting fifteen minutes to a solemn survey of the halls, and afterwards returning to his round. This was repeated every hour till sundown, and whenever the man went into the Museum a dozen or more persons would buy tickets and follow him, hoping to gratify their curiosity in regard to the purpose of his movements. This was continued for several days—the curious people who followed the man into the Museum considerably more than paying his wages—till, finally, the policeman, to whom I had imparted my object, complained that the obstruction of the sidewalk by crowds had become so serious that I must call in my "brick man." This trivial incident excited considerable talk and amusement; it advertised me; and it materially advanced my purpose of making a lively corner near the Museum.

The stories illustrating merely my introduction of novelties would more than fill this book, but I must make room for a few of them.

An actor, named La Rue, presented himself as an imitator of celebrated histrionic personages, including Macready,



Forrest, Kemble, the elder Booth, Kean, Hamblin, and others. Taking him into the green-room for a private rehearsal, and finding his imitations excellent, I engaged him. For three nights he gave great satisfaction, but early in the fourth evening he staggered into the Museum so drunk that he could hardly stand, and in half an hour he must be on the stage ! Calling an assistant, we took La Rue between us, and marched him up Broadway as far as Chambers Street, and back to the lower end of the Park, hoping to sober him. At this point we put his head under a pump, and gave him a good ducking, with visible beneficial effect ; then a walk around the Park, and another ducking, when he assured me that he should be able to give his imitations "to a charm."

"You drunken brute," said I, "if you fail, and disappoint my audience, I will throw you out of the window."

He declared that he was "all right," and I led him behind the scenes, where I waited with considerable trepidation to watch his movements on the stage. He began by saying :

"Ladies and gentlemen : I now give you an imitation of Mr. Booth, the eminent tragedian."

His tongue was thick, his language somewhat incoherent, and I had great misgivings as he proceeded ; but as no token of disapprobation came from the audience, I began to hope he would go through with his parts without exciting suspicion of his condition. But before he had half finished his representation of Booth, in the soliloquy in the opening act of *Richard III.*, the house discovered that he was very drunk, and began to hiss. This only seemed to stimulate him to make an effort to appear sober, which as is usual in such cases, only made matters worse, and the hissing increased. I lost all patience, and going on to the stage and taking the drunken fellow by the collar, I apologised to the audience, assuring them that he should not appear before them again. I was about to march him off, when he stepped to the front, and said :

"Ladies and gentlemen : Mr. Booth often appeared on the stage in a state of inebriety, and I was simply giving you a truthful representation of him on such occasions. I beg to be permitted to proceed with my imitations."

The audience at once supposed it was all right, and cried



out, "Go on, go on;" which he did, and at every imitation of Booth, whether as Richard, Shylock, or Sir Giles Overreach, he received a hearty round of applause. I was quite delighted with his success; but when he came to imitate Forrest and Hamblin, necessarily representing them as drunk also, the audience could be no longer deluded; the hissing was almost deafening, and I was forced to lead the actor off. It was his last appearance on my stage.

I determined to make people talk about my Museum; to exclaim over its wonders; to have men and women all over the country say: "There is not another place in the United States where so much can be seen for twenty-five cents as in Barnum's American Museum." It was the best advertisement I could possibly have, and one for which I could afford to pay. I knew, too, that it was an honourable advertisement, because it was as deserved as it was spontaneous. And so, in addition to the permanent collection and the ordinary attractions of the stage, I laboured to keep the Museum well supplied with transient novelties; I exhibited such living curiosities as a rhinoceros, giraffes, grizzly bears, ourang-outangs, great serpents, and whatever else of the kind money would buy or enterprise secure.

Very soon after introducing my extra exhibitions, I purchased for \$200 a curiosity which had much merit and some absurdity. It was a model of Niagara Falls, in which the merit was that the proportion of the great cataract, the trees, rocks, and buildings in the vicinity were mathematically given, while the absurdity was introducing "real water" to represent the falls. Yet the model served a purpose in making "a good line in the bill"—an end in view which was never neglected—and it helped to give the Museum notoriety. One day I was summoned to appear before the Board of Croton Water Commissioners, and was informed that as I paid only \$25 per annum for water at the Museum, I must pay a large extra compensation for the supply for my Niagara Falls. I begged the board not to believe all that appeared in the papers, nor to interpret my show-bills too literally, and assured them that a single barrel of water, if my pump was in good order, would furnish my falls for a month.



It was even so, for the water flowed into a reservoir behind the scenes, and was forced back with a pump over the falls. On one occasion, Mr. Louis Gaylord Clark, the editor of the *Knickerbocker*, came to view my Museum, and introduced himself to me. As I was quite anxious that my establishment should receive a first-rate notice at his hands, I took pains to show him everything of interest, except the Niagara Falls, which I feared would prejudice him against my entire show. But as we passed the room, the pump was at work, warning me that the great cataract was in full operation, and Clark, to my dismay, insisted upon seeing it.

"Well, Barnum, I declare this is quite a new idea; I never saw the like before."

"No?" I faintly inquired, with something like reviving hope.

"No," said Clark, "and I hope, with all my heart, I never shall again."

But the *Knickerbocker* spoke kindly of me, and refrained from all allusions to the "Cataract of Niagara," with real water.

A few weeks afterwards, I wrote to Clark that if he would come to my office I was anxious to consult him on a matter of great importance. He came, and I said:

"Now, I don't want any of your nonsense, but I want your sober advice."

He assured me that he would serve me in any way in his power, and I proceeded to tell him about a wonderful fish from the Nile, offered to me for exhibition at \$100 a week, the owner of which was willing to forfeit \$5,000; if, within six weeks, this fish did not pass through a transformation in which the tail would disappear, and the fish would then have legs.

"Is it possible!" asked the astonished Clark.

I assured him that there was no doubt of it.

Thereupon he advised me to engage the wonder at any price; that it would startle the naturalists, wake up the whole scientific world, draw in the masses, and make \$20,000 for the Museum. I told him that I thought well of the speculation, only I did not like the name of the fish.

"That makes no difference, whatever," cried Clark; "what is the name of the fish?"



"Tadpole," I replied, with becoming gravity, "but it is vulgarly called 'pollywog.'"

"Sold, by thunder!" exclaimed Clark, and he left.

A curiosity, which in an extraordinary degree served my ever-present object of extending the notoriety of the Museum, was the so-called "Feejee Mermaid." It has been supposed that this mermaid was manufactured by my order, but such is not the fact. I was known as a successful showman, and strange things of every sort were brought to me from all quarters, for sale or exhibition. In the summer of 1842, Mr. Moses Kimball of the Boston Museum, came to New York and showed me what purported to be a mermaid. He had bought it from a sailor, whose father, a sea-captain, had purchased it in Calcutta, in 1822, from some Japanese sailors. I may mention here that this identical preserved specimen was exhibited in London in 1822, as I fully verified in my visit to that city in 1858, for I found an advertisement of it in an old file of the *London Times*, and a friend gave me a copy of the *Mirror*, published by J. Limbird, 335 Strand, November 9, 1822, containing a cut of this same creature and two pages of letter-press describing it, together with an account of other mermaids said to have been captured in other parts of the world. The *Mirror* stated that this specimen was "the great source of attraction in the British metropolis, and three to four hundred people every day paid their shillings to see it."

This was the curiosity which had fallen into Mr. Kimball's hands. I requested my naturalist's opinion of the genuineness of the animal, and he said he could not conceive how it could have been manufactured, for he never saw a monkey with such peculiar teeth, arms, hands, &c., and he never saw a fish with such peculiar fins; but he did not believe in mermaids. Nevertheless, I concluded to hire this curiosity and to modify the general incredulity as to the possibility of the existence of mermaids.

Since Japan has been opened to the outer world, it has been discovered that certain "artists" in that country manufacture a great variety of fabulous animals, with an ingenuity and mechanical perfection well calculated to deceive. No doubt my mermaid was a specimen of this curious manufacture. I



used it mainly to advertise the regular business of the Museum and this effective indirect advertising is the only feature I can commend, in a special show of which, I confess, I am not proud.

When I became proprietor of the establishment, there were only the words, "American Museum," to indicate the character of the concern ; there was no bustle or activity about the place ; no posters to announce what was to be seen ;—the whole exterior was as dead as the skeletons and stuffed skins within. My experience has taught me the advantages of advertising. I printed whole columns in the papers, setting forth the wonders of my establishment.

Other and not less effective advertising—flags and banners—began to adorn the exterior of the building. I kept a band of music on the front balcony, and announced "Free Music for the Million."

Powerful Drummond lights, the first ever seen in New York, were placed at the top of the Museum, which, in the darkest night, threw a flood of light up and down Broadway.





## CHAPTER IX.

## THE ROAD TO RICHES.

THE American Museum was the ladder by which I rose to fortune. Whenever I cross Broadway at the head of Vesey Street, and see the *Herald* building and that gorgeous pile, the Park Bank, my mind's eye recalls that less solid, more showy edifice which once occupied the site, and was covered with pictures of all manner of beasts, birds and creeping things, and in which were treasures that brought treasure and notoriety and pleasant hours to me. The Jenny Lind enterprise was more audacious, more immediately remunerative, and I remember it with a pride which I do not attempt to conceal; but instinctively I often go back and live over again the old days of my struggles and triumphs in the American Museum.

The Museum was always open at sunrise, and this was so well known throughout the country that strangers coming to the city would often take a tour through my halls before going to breakfast or to their hotels. I do not believe there was ever a more truly popular place of amusement. I frequently compared the annual number of visitors with the number officially reported as visiting (free of charge) the British Museum in London, and my list was invariably the larger. Nor do I believe that any man or manager ever laboured more industriously to please his patrons. I furnished the most attractive exhibitions which money could procure; I abolished all vulgarity and profanity from the stage, and I prided myself upon the fact, that parents and children could attend the dramatic performances in the so-called Lecture Room, and not be shocked or offended by anything they might see or hear. The late Mr. Sothorn was a member of my dramatic company for one or two seasons. Mr. Barney Williams also began his theatrical career at the Museum.

The late Miss Mary Gannon also commenced at the Museum, and many more actors and actresses of celebrity



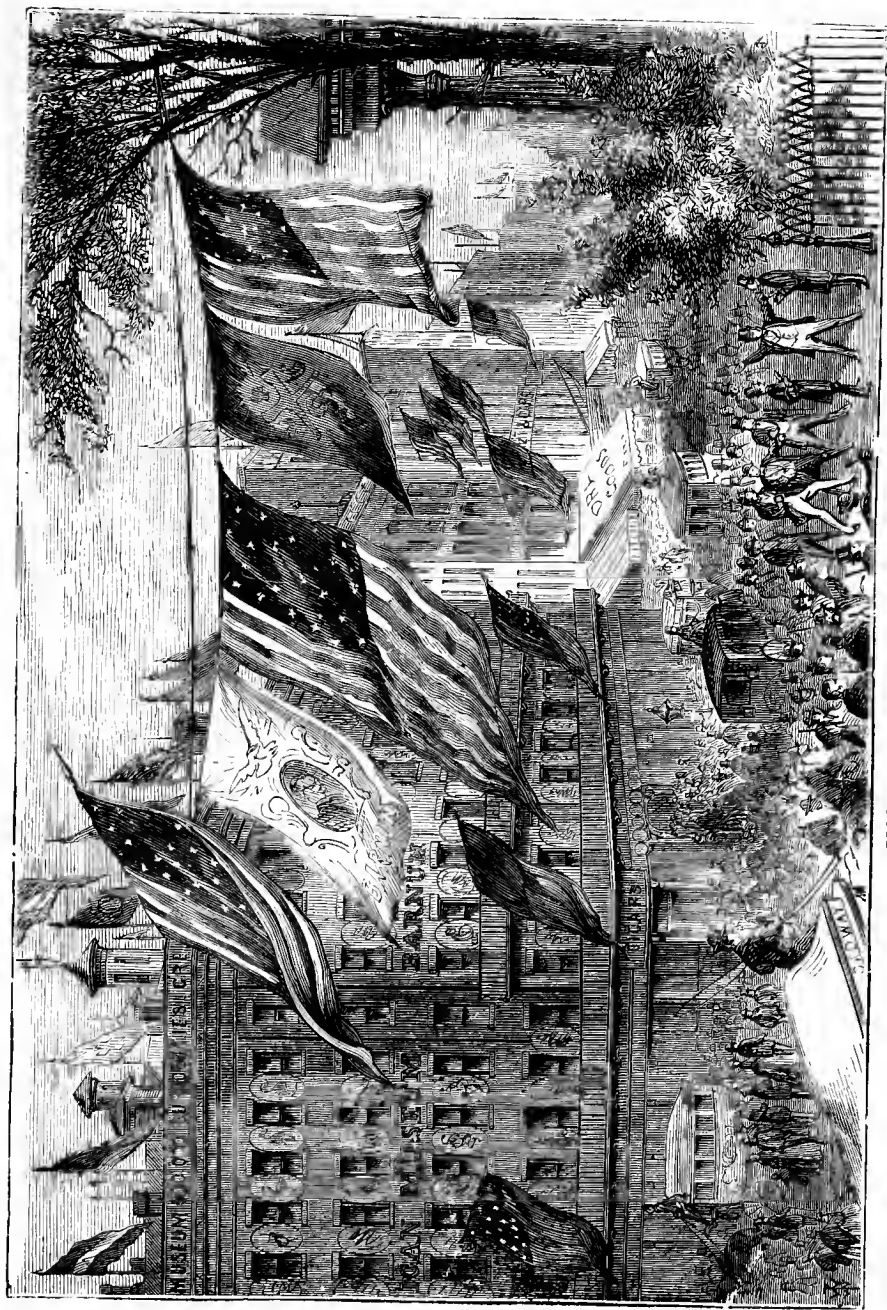
have been, from time to time, engaged there. What was once the small Lecture Room was converted into a spacious and beautiful theatre, extending over the lots adjoining the Museum, and capable of holding about three thousand persons. The saloons were greatly multiplied and enlarged, and the "egress" having been made to work to perfection, on holidays I advertised Lecture Room performances every hour through the afternoon and evening, and consequently the actors and actresses were dressed for the stage as early as eleven o'clock in the morning, and did not resume their ordinary clothes till ten o'clock at night. In these busy days the meals for the company were brought in and served in the dressing-rooms and green-rooms, and the company always received extra pay.

I confess that I liked the Museum mainly for the opportunities it afforded for rapidly making money. Before I bought it, I weighed the matter well in my mind, and was convinced that I could present to the American public such a variety, quantity and quality of amusement, blended with instruction, "all for twenty-five cents, children half-price," that my attractions would be irresistible, and my fortune certain. I myself relished a higher grade of amusement, and I was a frequent attendant at the opera, first-class concerts, lectures, and the like; but I worked for the million, and I knew the only way to make a million from my patrons was to give them abundant and wholesome attractions for a small sum of money.

About the first of July, 1842, I began to make arrangements for extra novelties, additional performances, a large amount of extra advertising, and an out-door display for the "Glorious Fourth." Large parti-coloured bills were ordered, transparencies were prepared, the free band of music was augmented by a trumpeter, and columns of advertisements, headed with large capitals, were written and put on file.

I wanted to run out a string of American flags across the street on that day, for I knew there would be thousands of people passing the Museum with leisure and pocket-money, and I felt confident that an unusual display of national flags would arrest their patriotic attention, and bring many of them





VICTORY OVER VESTRYMEN.



within my walls. Unfortunately for my purpose, St. Paul's Church stood directly opposite, and there was nothing to which I could attach my flag-rope, unless it might be one of the trees in the churchyard. I went to the vestrymen for permission to so attach my flag-rope on the Fourth of July, and they were indignant at what they called my "insulting proposition;" such a concession would be "sacrilege." I plied them with arguments, and appealed to their patriotism, but in vain.

Returning to the Museum, I gave orders to have the string of flags made ready, with directions at daylight on the Fourth of July to attach one end of the rope to one of the third-storey windows of the Museum, and the other end to a tree in St. Paul's churchyard. The great day arrived, and my orders were strictly followed. The flags attracted great attention. By half-past nine Broadway was thronged, and about that time two gentlemen, in a high state of excitement, rushed into my office, announcing themselves as injured and insulted vestrymen of St. Paul's Church.

"Keep cool, gentlemen," said I. "I guess it is all right."

"Right!" indignantly exclaimed one of them, "do you think it is right to attach your Museum to our Church? We will show you what is 'right' and what is law, if we live till to-morrow: those flags must come down instantly."

"Thank you," I said, "but let us not be in a hurry. I will go out with you and look at them, and I guess we can make it all right."

Going into the street, I remarked: "Really, gentlemen, these flags look very beautiful; they do not injure your tree; I always stop my balcony music for your accommodation whenever you hold week-day services, and it is but fair that you should return the favour."

"We could indict your 'music,' as you call it, as a nuisance, if we chose," answered one vestryman; "and now I tell you that if these flags are not taken down in ten minutes, I will cut them down."

His indignation was at boiling point. The crowd in the street was dense, and the angry gesticulation of the vestryman attracted their attention. I saw there was no use in



trying to parley with him or coax him, and so, assuming an angry air, I rolled up my sleeves, and exclaimed, in a loud tone :

"Well, Mister, I should just like to see you dare to cut down the American flag on the Fourth of July ; you must be a ' Britisher ' to make such a threat as that ; but I'll show you a thousand pairs of Yankee hands in two minutes, if you dare to attempt to take down the Stars and Stripes on this great birthday of American freedom ! "

"What's that John Bull a-saying ? " asked a brawny fellow, placing himself in front of the irate vestryman. "Look here, old fellow," he continued, "if you want to save a whole bone in your body, you had better slope, and never dare to talk again about hauling down the American flag in the city of New York."

Throngs of excited, exasperated men crowded around, and the vestryman, seeing the effect of my ruse, smiled faintly and said : "Oh, of course it is all right," and he and his companion quietly edged out of the crowd.

On that Fourth of July, at one o'clock P.M., my Museum was so densely crowded that we could admit no more visitors ; and we were compelled to stop the sale of tickets. Looking down into the street it was a sad sight to see the thousands of people who stood ready with their money to enter the Museum, but who were actually turned away. It was exceedingly harrowing to my feelings. Rushing downstairs, I told my carpenter and his assistants to cut through the partition and floor in the rear and put in a temporary flight of stairs so as to let out people by that egress into Ann Street. By three o'clock the egress was opened, and a few people were passed down the new stairs, while a corresponding number came in at the front. But I lost a large amount of money that day by not having sufficiently estimated the value of my own advertising, and consequently not having provided for the thousands who had read my announcements and seen my outside show, and had taken the first leisure day to visit the Museum. I had learned one lesson, however, and that was to have the egress ready on future holidays.

Early in the following March I received notice from some



of the Irish population that they meant to visit me in great numbers on "St. Patrick's day in the morning." "All right," said I to my carpenter, "get your egress ready for March 17;" and I added to my assistant manager: "If there is much of a crowd, don't let a single person pass out at the front, even if it were St. Patrick himself; put every man out through the egress in the rear." The day came, and before noon we were caught in the same dilemma as we were on the Fourth of July; the Museum was jammed, and the sale of tickets was stopped. I went to the egress and asked the sentinel how many hundreds had passed out.

"Hundreds," he replied, "why only three persons have gone out by this way, and they came back, saying it was a mistake, and begging to be let in again."

"What does this mean?" I inquired; "surely thousands of people have been all over the Museum since they came in."

"Certainly," was the reply, "but after they have gone from one saloon to another, and have been on every floor, even to the roof, they come down and travel the same route over again."

At this time I espied a tall Irish woman with two good-sized children, whom I had happened to notice when they came early in the morning.

"Step this way, madam," said I, politely, "you will never be able to get into the street by the front door without crushing these dear children. We have opened a large egress here, and you can pass by these rear stairs into Ann Street, and thus avoid all danger."

"Sure," replied the woman, indignantly, "an' I'm not going out at all, at all, nor the children aither, for we've brought our dinners, and we are going to stay all day."

Further investigation showed that pretty much all of my visitors had brought their dinners with the evident intention of literally "making a day of it." No one expected to go home till night; the building was overcrowded, and meanwhile hundreds were waiting at the front entrance to get in when they could. In despair I sauntered upon the stage behind the scenes, biting my lips with vexation, when I happened to see the scene-painter at work, and a happy thought



struck me. "Here," I exclaimed, "take a piece of canvas four feet square, paint on it, as soon as you can, in large letters,

**'E** TO THE EGRESS.'"

Seizing his brush, he finished the sign in fifteen minutes, and I directed the carpenter to nail it over the door leading to the back stairs. He did so, and as the crowd, after making the entire tour of the establishment, came pouring down the main stairs from the third storey, they stopped and looked at the new sign, while some of them read audibly: "To the Aigress."

"The Aigress," said the others, "sure that's an animal we haven't seen," and the throng began to pour down the back stairs only to find that the "Aigress" was the elephant, and that the elephant was all out o' doors, or so much of it as began with Ann Street. Meanwhile, I began to accommodate those who had long been waiting with their money at the Broadway entrance.

Money poured in upon me so rapidly that I was sometimes actually embarrassed to devise means to carry out my original plan for laying out the entire profits for the first year in advertising. I meant to sow first and reap afterwards. I finally hit upon a plan which cost a large sum, and that was to prepare large oval oil paintings to be placed between the windows of the entire building, representing nearly every important animal known in zoology. These paintings were put on the building in a single night, and so complete a transformation in the appearance of an edifice is seldom witnessed. When the living stream rolled down Broadway the next morning and reached the Astor House corner, opposite the Museum, it seemed to meet with a sudden check. I never before saw so many open mouths and astonished eyes. Some people were puzzled to know what it all meant; some looked as if they thought it was an enchanted palace that had suddenly sprung up; others exclaimed, "Well, the animals all seem to have 'broken out' last night," and hundreds came in to see how the establishment survived the sudden eruption.

From that morning the Museum receipts took a jump



forward of nearly a hundred dollars a day, and they never fell back again.

The Museum had become an established institution in the land.

On several occasions I got up "Baby shows," at which I paid liberal prizes for the finest baby, the fattest baby, the handsomest twins, for triplets, and so on. These shows were as popular as they were unique, and while they paid, in a financial point of view, my chief object in getting them up was to set the newspapers talking about me, thus giving another blast on the trumpet which I always tried to keep blowing for the Museum. Flower shows, dog shows, poultry shows, and bird shows were held at intervals in my establishment, and in each instance the same end was attained as by the baby shows. I gave prizes in the shape of medals, money, and diplomas, and the whole came back to me four-fold in the shape of advertising.

There was great difficulty, however, in awarding the principal prize of \$100 at the baby shows. Every mother thought her own baby the brightest and best, and confidently expected the capital prize.

For where was ever seen the mother  
Would give her baby for another?

Not foreseeing this, when I first stepped into the expectant circle and announced in a matter-of-fact way that a committee of ladies had decided upon the baby of Mrs. So-and-So as entitled to the leading prize, I was ill-prepared for the storm of indignation that arose on every side. Ninety-nine disappointed and, as they thought, deeply injured mothers made common cause, and pronounced the successful little one the meanest, homeliest baby in the lot, and roundly abused me and my committee for our stupidity and partiality. "Very well, ladies," said I, in the first instance, "select a committee of your own, and I will give another \$100 prize to the baby you shall pronounce to be the best specimen." This was only throwing oil upon the flame; the ninety-nine confederates were deadly enemies from the moment, and no new babies were presented in competition for the second prize.





SQUALLS AND BREEZES.



Thereafter, I took good care to send in a written report, and did not attempt to announce the prize in person.

In June, 1843, a herd of yearling buffaloes was on exhibition in Boston. I bought the lot, brought them to New Jersey, hired the racecourse at Hoboken, chartered the ferry-boats for one day, and advertised that a hunter had arrived with a herd of buffaloes—I was careful not to state their age—and that on August 31st there would be a "Grand Buffalo Hunt" on the Hoboken racecourse—all persons to be admitted free of charge.

The appointed day was warm and delightful, and no less than twenty-four thousand people crossed the North River in the ferry-boats to enjoy the cooling breeze and to see the "Grand Buffalo Hunt." The hunter was dressed as an Indian, and, mounted on horseback, he proceeded to show how the wild buffalo is captured with a lasso, but unfortunately the yearlings would not run till the crowd gave a great shout, expressive at once of derision and delight at the harmless humbug. This shout startled the young animals into a weak gallop, and the lasso was duly thrown over the head of the largest calf. The crowd roared with laughter, listened to my balcony band, which I also furnished "free," and then started for New York, little dreaming who was the author of this sensation, or what was its object.

After the public had enjoyed a laugh for several days over the Hoboken "Free Grand Buffalo Hunt," I permitted it to be announced that the proprietor of the American Museum was responsible for the joke, thus using the buffalo hunt as a sky-rocket to attract public attention to my Museum. I ought to add that the forty-eight thousand sixpences—the usual fare—received for ferry fares, less what I paid for the charter of the boats on that one day, more than remunerated me for the cost of the buffaloes and the expenscs of the "hunt;" and the enormous gratuitous advertising of the Museum must also be placed to my credit.

About this time I engaged a band of Indians from Iowa. They had never seen a railroad or steamboat until they saw them on the route from Iowa to New York. The party comprised large and noble specimens of the untutored savage, as



well as several very beautiful squaws, with two or three interesting "papooses." They lived and lodged in a large room on the top floor of the Museum, and cooked their own victuals in their own way. They gave their war dances on the stage in the Lecture-room with great vigour and enthusiasm, much to the satisfaction of the audiences. But these wild Indians seemed to consider their dances as realities. Hence, when they gave a real war dance, it was dangerous for any parties except their manager and interpreter, to be on the stage, for the moment they had finished their war dance they began to leap and peer about behind the scenes in search of victims for their tomahawks and scalping-knives! Indeed, lest in these frenzied moments they might make a dash at the orchestra or the audience, we had a high rope barrier placed between them and the savages on the front of the stage.

After they had been a week in the Museum, I proposed a change of performance for the week following, by introducing new dances. Among these was the Indian wedding dance. At that time I printed but one set of posters (large bills) per week, so that whatever was announced for Monday was repeated every day and evening during that week. Before the wedding dance came off on Monday afternoon, I was informed that I was to provide a large new red woollen blanket, at a cost of ten dollars, for the bridegroom to present to the father of the bride. I ordered the purchase to be made; but was considerably taken aback, when I was informed that I must have another new blanket for the evening, inasmuch as the savage old Indian chief, father-in-law to the bridegroom, would not consent to his daughter being approached with the wedding dance unless he had his blanket present.

I undertook to explain to the chief, through the interpreter, that this was only a "make-believe" wedding; but the old savage shrugged his shoulders, and gave such a terrible "Ugh!" that I was glad to make my peace by ordering another blanket. As we gave two performances per day, I was out of pocket \$120 for twelve "wedding blankets" that week.

One of the beautiful squaws, named Do-humme, died in the Museum. She had been a great favourite with many ladies



among whom I can especially name Mrs. C. M. Sawyer, wife of the Rev. Dr. T. J. Sawyer. Do-humme was buried on the border of Sylvan Water, at Greenwood Cemetery, where a small monument, erected by her friends, designates her last resting-place.

The poor Indians were very sorrowful for many days, and desired to get back again to their Western wilds. The father and the betrothed of Do-humme cooked various dishes of food and placed them upon the roof of the Museum, where they believed the spirit of their departed friend came daily for its supply; and these dishes were renewed every morning during the stay of the Indians at the Museum.





## CHAPTER X.

## ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SPECULATION.

By some arrangement, the particulars of which I do not remember, if, indeed I ever cared to know them, Mr. Peale was conducting Peale's Museum, which he claimed was a more "scientific" establishment than mine, and he pretended to appeal to a higher class of patrons. Mesmerism was one of his scientific attractions, and he had a subject upon whom he operated at times with the greatest seeming success, and fairly astonished his audiences. But there were times when the subject was wholly unimpressible, and then those who had paid their money to see the woman put into the mesmeric state cried out "Humbug," and the reputation of the establishment seriously suffered.

It devolved upon me to open a rival mesmeric performance, and accordingly I engaged a bright little girl, who was exceedingly susceptible to such mesmeric influences as I could induce. That is, she learned her lesson thoroughly, and when I had apparently put her to sleep with a few passes and stood behind her, she seemed to be duly "impressed" as I desired; raised her hands as I willed; fell from her chair to the floor; and if I put candy or tobacco into my mouth, she was duly delighted or disgusted. She never failed in these routine performances. Strange to say, believers in mesmerism used to witness her performance with the greatest pleasure and adduce them as positive proofs that there was something in mesmerism, and they applauded tremendously—up to a certain point.

That point was reached when, leaving the girl "asleep," I called up some one in the audience, promising to put him "in the same state" within five minutes, or forfeit fifty dollars. Of course, all my "passes" would not put a man in the mesmeric state; at the end of three minutes he was as wide awake as ever.



"Never mind," I would say, looking at my watch; "I have two minutes more, and meantime, to show that a person in this state is utterly insensible to pain, I propose to cut off one of the fingers of the little girl who is still asleep." I would then take out my knife and feel the edge, and when I turned round to the girl whom I left on the chair, she had fled behind the scenes, to the intense amusement of the greater part of the audience, and to the amazement of the mesmerists who were present.

"Why! where is my little girl?" I asked, with feigned astonishment.

"Oh! she ran away when you began to talk about cutting off fingers," said the man on whom I was experimenting.

"Then she was wide awake, was she?"

"Of course she was, all the time."

"I suppose so; and, my dear sir, I promised that you should be 'in the same state' at the end of five minutes, and as I believe you are so, I do not forfeit fifty dollars."

I kept up this performance for several weeks, till I quite killed Peale's "genuine" mesmerism in the rival establishment. At the end of six months I bought Peale's Museum, and the whole, including the splendid gallery of American portraits, was removed to the American Museum, and I immediately advertised the great card of a "Double Attraction" and "Two Museums in One," without extra charge.

I had at one time two famous men—the French giant, M. Bihin, a very slim man, and the Arabian giant, Colonel Goshen. These men generally got on together very well, though of course, each was jealous of the other, and of the attention the rival received, or the notice he attracted. One day they quarrelled, and a lively interchange of compliments ensued, the Arabian calling the Frenchman a "Shanghai," and receiving in return the epithet of "Nigger." From words both were eager to proceed to blows, and both ran to my collection of arms, one seizing the club with which Captain Cook, or any other man, might have been killed, if it were judiciously wielded, and the other laying hands on a sword of the terrific size which is supposed to have been conventional in the days of the Crusades. The preparations for a deadly en-





THE AUTHOR TRAINING TOM THUMB.



counter, and the high words of the contending parties brought a dozen of the Museum *attachés* to the spot, and these men threw themselves between the gigantic combatants. Hearing the disturbance, I ran from my private office to the duelling ground, and said :

“Look here ! This is all right ; if you want to fight each other, maiming or perhaps killing one or both of you, that is your affair ; but my interest lies here : you are both under engagement to me, and if this duel is to come off, I and the public have a right to participate. It must be duly advertised, and must take place on the stage of the Lecture Room. No performance of yours would be a greater attraction, and if you kill each other, our engagement can end with your duel.”

This proposition, made in apparent earnest, so delighted the giants that they at once burst into a laugh, shook hands, and quarrelled no more.

In November, 1842, I was at Bridgeport, Connecticut, where I heard of a remarkably small child, and at my request, my brother, Philo F. Barnum, brought him to the hotel. He was not two feet high ; he weighed less than sixteen pounds, and was the smallest child I ever saw that could walk alone ; but he was a perfectly-formed, bright-eyed little fellow, with light hair and ruddy cheeks, and he enjoyed the best of health. He was exceedingly bashful, but after some coaxing, he was induced to talk with me, and he told me he was the son of Sherwood E. Stratton, and that his own name was Charles S. Stratton. After seeing him and talking with him, I at once determined to secure his services from his parents and to exhibit him in public.

I engaged him for four weeks, at three dollars a week, with all travelling and boarding expenses for himself and his mother at my expense. They came to New York on Thanksgiving Day, December 8, 1842, and I announced the dwarf on my museum bills as “General Tom Thumb.”

I took the greatest pains to educate and train my diminutive prodigy, devoting many hours to the task by day and by night, and I was very successful, for he was an apt pupil, with a great deal of native talent and a keen sense of the ludicrous.



I afterwards re-engaged him for one year, at seven dollars a week, with a gratuity of fifty dollars at the end of the engagement, and the privilege of exhibiting him anywhere in the United States, in which event his parents were to accompany him, and I was to pay all travelling expenses. He speedily became a public favourite, and, long before the year was out, I voluntarily increased his weekly salary to twenty-five dollars, and he fairly earned it.

Two years had now elapsed since I bought the Museum, and I had long since paid for the entire establishment from the profits; I had bought out my only rival; I was free from debt, and had a handsome surplus in the treasury. The business had long ceased to be an experiment; it was an established success, and was in such perfect running order that it could safely be committed to the management of trustworthy and tried agents.

Accordingly, looking for a new field for my individual efforts, I entered into an agreement for General Tom Thumb's services for another year, at fifty dollars a week and all expenses, with the privilege of exhibiting him in Europe. I proposed to test the curiosity of men and women on the other side of the Atlantic.

After arranging my business affairs for a long absence, and making every preparation for an extended foreign tour, on Thursday, January 18, 1844, I went on board the new and fine sailing ship *Yorkshire*, Captain D. G. Bailey, bound for Liverpool. Our party included General Tom Thumb, his parents, his tutor, and Professor Guillaudeau, the French naturalist. We were accompanied by several personal friends, and the City Brass Band kindly volunteered to escort us to Sandy Hook.

A voyage to Liverpool is now an old, familiar story, and I abstain from entering into details, though I have abundant material respecting my own experiences of my first sea voyage in the first two of a series of one hundred letters which I wrote to Europe, as correspondent of the *New York Atlas*.

On our arrival at Liverpool, quite a crowd had assembled at the dock to see Tom Thumb, for it had been previously announced that he would arrive in the *Yorkshire*, but his



mother managed to smuggle him ashore unnoticed, for she carried him, as if he were an infant, in her arms.

My letters of introduction speedily brought me into friendly relations with many excellent families, and I was induced to hire a hall and present the General to the public, for a short season, in Liverpool. I had intended to proceed directly to London, and begin operations at "headquarters"—that is, in Buckingham Palace, if possible; but I had been advised that the Royal Family was in mourning for the death of Prince Albert's father, and would not permit the approach of any entertainments.

Meanwhile, confidential letters from London informed me that Mr. Maddox, Manager of the Princess's Theatre, was coming down to witness my exhibition, with a view to making an engagement. He came privately, but I was fully informed as to his presence and object. A friend pointed him out to me in the hall, and when I stepped up to him and called him by name, he was "taken all aback," and avowed his purpose in visiting Liverpool. An interview resulted in an engagement of the General for three nights at the Princess's Theatre. I was unwilling to contract for a longer period, and even this short engagement, though on liberal terms, was acceded to only as a means of advertisement. So soon, therefore, as I could bring my short but highly successful season in Liverpool to a close, we went to London.





## CHAPTER XI.

## GENERAL TOM THUMB IN ENGLAND.

IMMEDIATELY after our arrival in London, the General came out at the Princess's Theatre, and made so decided a "hit" that it was difficult to decide who was best pleased, the spectators, the manager, or myself. I was offered far higher terms for a re-engagement, but my purpose had been already answered; the news was spread everywhere that General Tom Thumb, an unparalleled curiosity, was in the city; and it only remained for me to bring him before the public, on my own account, and in my own time and way.

I took a furnished mansion in Grafton Street, Bond Street, West End, in the very centre of the most fashionable locality. The house had previously been occupied for several years by Lord Talbot, and Lord Brougham, and half a dozen families of the aristocracy and many of the gentry were my neighbours. From this magnificent mansion, I sent letters of invitation to the editors and several of the nobility, to visit the General. Most of them called, and were highly gratified.

During our first week in London, the Hon. Edward Everett, the American Minister, to whom I had letters of introduction, called, and was highly pleased with his diminutive though renowned countryman. We dined with him the next day, by invitation, and his family loaded the young American with presents. Mr. Everett kindly promised to use influence at the Palace in person, with a view to having Tom Thumb introduced to Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

A few evenings afterwards the Baroness Rothschild sent her carriage for us. We were received by half a dozen servants, and were ushered up a broad flight of marble stairs to the drawing-room, where we met the Baroness and a party of twenty or more ladies and gentlemen. In this sumptuous mansion of the richest banker in the world, we spent about two hours, and when we took our leave a well-filled purse was



quietly slipped into my hand. The golden shower had begun to fall.

I now engaged the "Egyptian Hall," in Piccadilly, and the announcement of my unique exhibition was promptly answered by a rush of visitors, in which the wealth and fashion of London were liberally represented. I made these arrangements because I had little hope of being soon brought to the Queen's presence (for the reason before mentioned), but Mr. Everett's generous influence secured my object. I breakfasted at his house one morning, by invitation, in company with Mr. Charles Murray, an author of creditable repute, who held the office of Master of the Queen's Household. In the course of conversation, Mr. Murray inquired as to my plans, and I informed him that I intended going to the Continent shortly, though I should be glad to remain if the General could have an interview with the Queen, adding that such an event would be of great consequence to me.

Mr. Murray kindly offered his good offices in the case, and the next day one of the Life Guards, a tall, noble-looking fellow, bedecked as became his station, brought me a note, conveying the Queen's invitation to General Tom Thumb, and his guardian Mr. Barnum, to appear at Buckingham Palace on an evening specified. Special instructions were the same day orally given me by Mr. Murray, by Her Majesty's command, to suffer the General to appear before her, as he would appear anywhere else, without any training in the use of the titles of royalty, as the Queen desired to see him act naturally and without restraint.

Determined to make the most of the occasion, I put a placard on the door of the Egyptian Hall: "Closed this evening, General Tom Thumb being at Buckingham Palace by command of Her Majesty."

On arriving at the Palace, the Lord-in-Waiting put me "under drill" as to the manner and form in which I should conduct myself in the presence of Royalty. I was to answer all questions by Her Majesty through him, and in no event, to speak directly to the Queen. In leaving the royal presence I was to "back out," keeping my face always towards Her Majesty, and the illustrious lord kindly gave me a specimen of



that sort of backward locomotion. How far I profited by his instructions and example will presently appear.

We were conducted through a long corridor to a broad flight of marble steps, which led to the Queen's magnificent picture gallery, where Her Majesty and Prince Albert, the Duchess of Kent, and twenty or thirty of the nobility were awaiting our arrival. They were standing at the farther end of the room when the doors were thrown open, and the General walked in, looking like a wax doll gifted with the power of locomotion. Surprise and pleasure were depicted on the countenances of the royal circle at beholding this remarkable specimen of humanity so much smaller than they had evidently expected to find him.

The General advanced with a firm step, and, as he came within hailing distance made a very graceful bow, and exclaimed, "Good-evening, ladies and gentlemen!"

A burst of laughter followed this salutation. The Queen then took him by the hand, led him about the gallery, and asked him many questions, the answers to which kept the party in an uninterrupted strain of merriment. The General familiarly informed the Queen that her picture gallery was "first-rate," and told her he should like to see the Prince of Wales. The Queen replied that the Prince had retired to rest, but that he should see him on some future occasion. The General gave them his songs, dances, and imitations, and, after a conversation with Prince Albert and all present, which continued for more than an hour, we were permitted to depart.

The Queen was modestly attired in plain black, and wore no ornaments. Indeed, surrounded as she was by ladies arrayed in the highest style of magnificence, their dresses sparkling with diamonds, she was the last person whom a stranger would have pointed out in that circle as the Queen of England.

The Lord-in-Waiting was perhaps pleased when he saw me following his illustrious example in retiring from the royal presence. He was accustomed to the process, and therefore was able to keep somewhat ahead (or rather aback) of me, but even *I* stepped rather fast for the other member of the



retiring party. We had a considerable distance to travel in that long gallery before reaching the door, and whenever the General found he was losing ground, he turned around and ran a few steps, then resumed the position of "backing out," then turned around and ran, and so continued to alternate his methods of getting to the door, until the gallery fairly rang with the inerriment of the royal spectators. It was really one of the richest scenes I ever saw running, under the circumstances, was an offence sufficiently heinous to excite the indignation of the Queen's favourite poodle dog, and he vented his displeasure by barking so sharply as to startle the General from his propriety. He, however, recovered immediately, and with his little cane commenced an attack on the poodle, and a funny fight ensued which renewed and increased the merriment of the royal party.

This was near the door of exit. We had scarcely passed into the ante-room, when one of the Queen's attendants came to us with the expressed hope of Her Majesty that the General had sustained no damage; to which the Lord-in-Waiting playfully added, that in case of injury to so renowned a personage, he should fear a declaration of war by the United States.

The courtesies of the Palace were not yet exhausted, for we were escorted to an apartment in which refreshments had been provided for us. The *Court Journal* of the ensuing day gave an account of our appearance at Court, which was published in all the London daily journals.

This notice of my visit to the Queen wonderfully increased the attraction of my exhibition, and compelled me to obtain a more commodious hall for my exhibition. I accordingly removed to the larger room in the same building.

On our second visit to the Queen, we were received in what is called the "Yellow Drawing-room," a magnificent apartment, surpassing in splendour and gorgeousness anything of the kind I had ever seen. It is on the north side of the gallery, and is entered from that apartment. It was hung with drapery of rich yellow satin damask, the couches, sofas and chairs being covered with the same material. The vases,





E. SEARS.

TOM THUMB AND THE POODLE.



urns and ornaments were all of modern patterns, and the most exquisite workmanship. The room was panelled in gold, and the heavy cornices beautifully carved and gilt. The tables, pianos, &c., were mounted with gold, inlaid with pearl of various hues, and of the most elegant designs.

We were ushered into this gorgeous drawing-room before the Queen and royal circle had left the dining-room, and as they approached, the General bowed respectfully, and remarked to Her Majesty "that he had seen her before," adding, "I think this is a prettier room than the picture gallery; that chandelier is very fine."

The Queen took him by the hand, and said she hoped he was very well.

"Yes, madam," he replied, "I am first-rate."

"General," continued the Queen, "this is the Prince of Wales."

"How are you, Prince?" said the General, shaking him by the hand; and then, standing beside the Prince, he remarked, "The Prince is taller than I am, but I feel as big as anybody," upon which he strutted up and down the room as proud as a peacock, amid the shouts of laughter from all present.

The Queen then introduced the Princess Royal, and the General immediately led her to his elegant little sofa, which we took with us, and with much politeness sat himself down beside her. Then, rising from his seat, he went through his various performances; and the Queen handed him an elegant and costly souvenir, which had been expressly made for him by her order, for which he told her, "he was very much obliged, and would keep it as long as he lived." The Queen of the Belgians (daughter of King Louis Philippe) was present on this occasion. She asked the General where he was going when he left London?

"To Paris," he replied.

"Whom do you expect to see there?" she continued.

Of course all expected he would answer, "the King of the French," but the little fellow replied:

"Monsieur Guillaudeau."

The two Queens looked inquiringly to me, and when I informed them that M. Guillaudeau was my French naturalist,



who had preceded me to Paris, they laughed most heartily.

On our third visit to Buckingham Palace, Leopold, King of the Belgians, was also present. He was highly pleased, and asked a multitude of questions. Queen Victoria desired the General to sing a song, and asked him what song he preferred to sing.

"Yankee Doodle," was the prompt reply.

This answer was as unexpected to me as it was to the royal party. When the merriment it occasioned had somewhat subsided, the Queen good-humouredly remarked, "That is a very pretty song, General; sing it, if you please." The General complied, and soon afterwards we retired. I ought to add that after each of our three visits to Buckingham Palace, a very handsome sum was sent to me, of course by the Queen's command. This, however, was the smallest part of the advantage derived from these interviews, as will be at once apparent to all who consider the force of Court example in England.

The British public was now fairly excited. Not to have seen General Tom Thumb was decidedly unfashionable, and from March 20th until July 20th, the levées of the little General, at the Egyptian Hall, were continually crowded, the receipts averaging during the whole period about five hundred dollars per day, and sometimes going considerably beyond that sum. At the fashionable hour, sixty carriages of the nobility have been counted, at one time, standing in front of our exhibition rooms in Piccadilly.

Portraits of the little General were published in all the pictorial papers of the time. Polkas and quadrilles were named after him, and songs were sung in his praise. He was an almost constant theme for the London *Punch*, which served up the General and myself so daintily that it no doubt added vastly to our receipts.

Besides his three public performances per day, the little General attended three or four private parties per week, for which we were paid eight to ten guineas each. Frequently we would visit two parties in the same evening, and the demand in that line was much greater than the supply. The Queen Dowager Adelaide requested the General's attendance



at Marlborough House one afternoon. He went in his Court dress, consisting of a richly embroidered brown silk-velvet coat and short breeches, white satin vest with fancy coloured embroidery, white silk stockings and pumps, wig, bagwig, cocked hat, and a dress sword.

"Why, General," said the Queen Dowager, "I think you look very smart to-day."

"I guess I do," said the General, complacently.

A large party of the nobility were present. The old Duke of Cambridge offered the little General a pinch of snuff, which he declined. The General sang his songs, performed his dances, and cracked his jokes, to the great amusement and delight of the distinguished circle of visitors.

"Dear little General," said the kind-hearted Queen, taking him upon her lap, "I see you have got no watch. Will you permit me to present you with a watch and chain?"

"I would like them very much," replied the General, his eyes glistening with joy as he spoke.

"I will have them made expressly for you," responded the Queen Dowager; and at the same moment she called a friend and desired him to see that the proper order was executed. A few weeks thereafter we were called again to Marlborough House. A number of the children of the nobility were present, as well as some of their parents. After passing a few compliments with the General, Queen Adelaide presented him with a beautiful little gold watch, placing the chain round his neck with her own hands.

After giving his performances, we withdrew from the royal presence, and the elegant little watch presented by the hands of Her Majesty the Queen Dowager, was not only duly heralded, but was also placed upon a pedestal in the hall of exhibition, together with the presents from Queen Victoria, and covered with a glass vase. These presents, to which were soon added an elegant gold snuff-box mounted with turquoises, presented by his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, and many other costly gifts of the nobility and gentry, added to the attractions of the exhibition. The Duke of Wellington called frequently to see the little General at his public levées. The first time he called, the General was personating Napoleon





THE GREAT DUKE AND THE LITTLE GENERAL.



Bonaparte, marching up and down the platform, and apparently taking snuff in deep meditation. He was dressed in the well-known uniform of the Emperor. I introduced him to the "Iron Duke," who inquired the subject of his meditations. "I was thinking of the loss of the battle of Waterloo," was the little General's immediate reply. This display of wit was chronicled throughout the country, and was of itself worth thousands of pounds to the exhibition.

General Tom Thumb had visited the King of Saxony, and also Ibrahim Pacha, who were then in London. At the different parties we attended, we met, in the course of the season, nearly all of the nobility. Scarcely a nobleman in England failed to see General Tom Thumb at his own house, at the house of a friend, or at the public levées at the Egyptian Hall. The General was a decided pet with some of the first personages in the land, among whom may be mentioned Sir Robert and Lady Peel, the Duke and Duchess of Buckingham, Duke of Bedford, Duke of Devonshire, Count d'Orsay, Lady Blessington, Lord Adolphus FitzClarence, Lord Chesterfield, Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Bates, of the firm of Baring Brothers and Co., and many other persons of distinction. We had the free entrée to all theatres, public gardens, and places of entertainment, and frequently met the principal artists, editors, poets, and authors of the country. Albert Smith wrote a play for the General entitled "Hop o' my Thumb," which was presented with great success at the Lyccum Theatre, London, and in several of the provincial theatres. Our visit in London and tour through the provinces were enormously successful; and, after a brilliant season in Great Britain, I made preparations to take the General to Paris.



## CHAPTER XII.

## IN FRANCE.

BEFORE taking the little General and party to Paris, I went over alone to arrange the preliminaries for our campaign in that city.

I was very fortunate in making the acquaintance of Mr. Dion Boucicault, who was then temporarily sojourning in that city, and who at once kindly volunteered to advise and assist me in regard to numerous matters of importance relating to the approaching visit of the General. He spent a day with me in the search for suitable accommodation for my company; and by giving me the benefit of his experience, he saved me much trouble and expense. I have never forgotten the courtesy extended to me by this gentleman.

I hired, at a large rent, the Salle Musard, Rue Vivienne. I made the most complete arrangements, even to starting the preliminary paragraphs in the Paris papers; and after calling on the Honourable William Rufus King, the United States Minister at the Court of France, who assured me that, after my success in London, there would be no difficulty whatever in my presentation to King Louis Philippe, I returned to England.

I went back to Paris with General Tom Thumb and party some time before I intended to begin my exhibitions, and on the very day after my arrival I received a special command to appear at the Tuileries on the following Sunday evening.

At the appointed hour the General and I, arrayed in the conventional Court costume, were ushered into a grand saloon of the Palace, where we were introduced to the King, the Queen, Princess Adelaide, the Duchess d'Orleans and her son, the Count de Paris, Prince de Joinville, Duke and Duchess de Nemours, the Duchess d'Aumale, and a dozen or more distinguished persons, among whom was the editor of the official *Journal des Debats*. General Tom Thumb went



through his various performances to the manifest pleasure of all who were present, and at the close the King presented to him a large emerald brooch set with diamonds. The General expressed his gratitude, and the King, turning to me, said : "You may put it on the General, if you please," which I did, to the evident gratification of the King as well as the General.

King Louis Philippe was so condescending and courteous that I felt quite at home in the royal presence, and ventured upon a bit of diplomacy. The Longchamps celebration was coming—a day once devoted to religious ceremony, but now conspicuous for the display of court and fashionable equipages in the Champs Elysées and the Bois des Boulogne; and as the King was familiarly conversing with me, I ventured to say that I had hurried over to Paris to take part in the Longchamps display, and I asked him if the General's carriage could not be permitted to appear in the avenue reserved for the Court and the Diplomatic Corps, representing that the General's small but elegant establishment, with its ponies and little coachman and footman, would be in danger of damage in the general throng, unless the special privilege I asked was accorded.

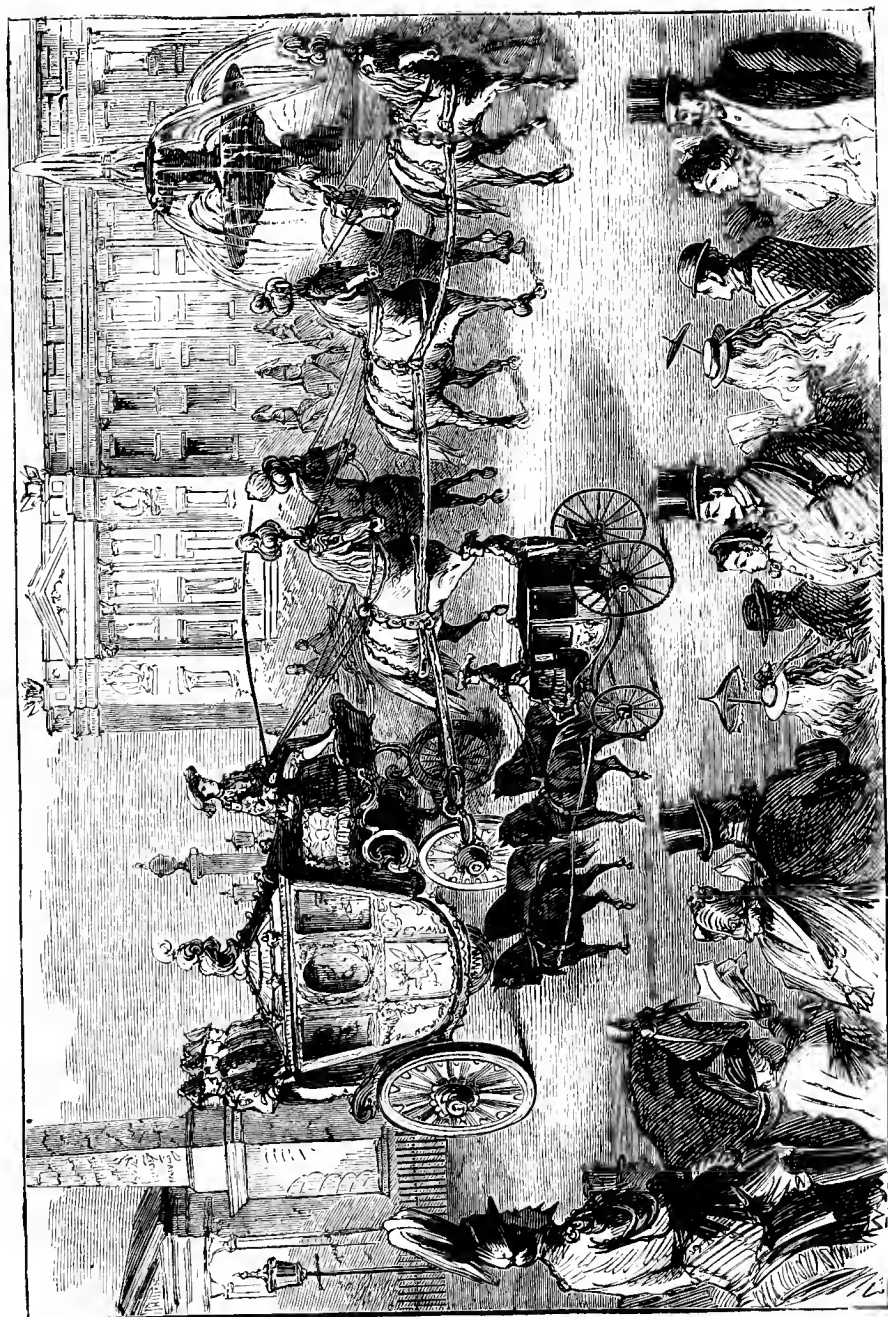
The King smilingly turned to one of the officers of his household, and, after conversing with him for a few moments, he said to me :

"Call on the Prefect of Police to-morrow afternoon, and you will find a permit ready for you."

Our visit occupied two hours, and when we went away the General was loaded with fine presents. The next morning all the newspapers noticed the visit, and the *Journal des Debats* gave a minute account of the interview and of the General's performances, taking occasion to say, in speaking of the character parts, that "there was one costume which the General wisely kept at the bottom of his box." That costume, however—the uniform of Bonaparte—was once exhibited, by particular request, as will be seen anon.

Longchamps day arrived, and among the many splendid equipages on the Grand Avenue, none attracted more attention than the superb little carriage with four ponies and





ROYAL HONORS TO THE GENERAL.



liveried and powdered coachman and footman, belonging to the General, and conspicuous in the line of carriages containing the Ambassadors to the Court of France. Thousands upon thousands rent the air with cheers for "General Tom Pouce."

Thus, before I opened the exhibition, all Paris knew that General Tom Thumb was in the city. The élite of the city came to the exhibition; the first day's receipts were 5,500 francs, which would have been doubled if I could have made room for more patrons. There were afternoon and evening performances, and from that day secured seats, at an extra price, were engaged in advance for the entire two months. The season was more than a success; it was a triumph.

It seemed, too, as if the whole city was advertising me. The papers were profuse in their praises of the General and his performances. *Figaro*, the *Punch* of Paris, gave a picture of an immense mastiff running away with the General's carriage and horses in his mouth. Statuettes of "Tom Pouce" appeared in all the windows, in plaster, Parian, sugar and chocolate; songs were written about him, and his lithograph was seen everywhere. A fine café on one of the boulevards, took the name of "Tom Pouce," and displayed over the door a life-size statue of the General. In Paris, as in London, several eminent painters expressed their desire to paint his portrait, but the General's engagements were so pressing that he found little time to sit to artists. All the leading actors and actresses came to the General's levées, and petted him and made him many presents. Meanwhile, the daily receipts continued to swell, and I was compelled to take a cab to carry my bag of silver home at night.

We were commanded to appear twice more at the Tuileries, and we were also invited to the Palace on the King's birthday, to witness the display of fireworks in honour of the anniversary. Our fourth and last visit to the Royal Family was, by special invitation, at St. Cloud. On this one occasion, and by the special request of the King, the General personated Napoleon Bonaparte in full costume. Louis Philippe had heard of the General in this character, and particularly desired to see him: but the affair was quite "on the sly," and no



mention was made of it in the papers. We remained an hour, and at parting, each of the royal company gave the General a splendid present, almost smothered him with kisses, wished him a safe journey through France, and a long and happy life. After bidding them adieu, we retired to another portion of the Palace to make a change of the General's costume, and to partake of some refreshments which were prepared for us. Half an hour afterwards, as we were about leaving the Palace, we went through a hall leading to the front door, and in doing so, passed the sitting-room in which the Royal Family were spending the evening. The door was open, and some of them happening to espy the General, called out for him to come in and shake hands with them once more. We entered the apartment, and there found the ladies sitting around a square table, each provided with two candles, and every one of them, including the Queen, was engaged in working embroidery, while a young lady was reading aloud for their edification. I am sorry to say, I believe this is a sight seldom seen in families of the aristocracy on either side of the water. At the church fairs in Paris, I had frequently seen pieces of embroidery for sale, which were labelled as having been worked and presented by the Duchess d'Orleans, Princess Adelaide, Duchess de Nemours, and other titled ladies.

During my stay in Paris, a Russian Prince, who had been living in great splendour in that city, suddenly died, and his household and personal effects were sold at auction. I attended the sale for several days in succession, buying many articles of vertu, and, among others, a magnificent gold tea-set, and a silver dining-service, and many rare specimens of Sèvres china. These articles bore the initials of the family name of the Prince, and his own, "P.T.," thus damaging the articles, so that the silver and gold were sold for their weight-value only. I bought them, and adding "B." to the "P.T." had a very fine table service, still in my possession, and bearing my own initials, "P.T.B."

After a protracted and most profitable season, we started on a tour through France. We went first to Rouen, and from thence to Toulon, visiting all the intermediate towns, including



Orleans, Nantes, Brest, Bordeaux, where I witnessed a review by the Dukes de Nemours and D'Aumale, of 20,000 soldiers, who were encamped near the city. From Bordeaux we went to Toulouse, Montpellier, Nismes, Marseilles, and many other less important places, holding levées for a longer or shorter time. While at Nantes, Bordeaux, and Marseilles, the General also appeared in the theatres in his French part of "Petit Poucet," a French play written expressly for him in Paris, and performed with great éclat in the Théâtre Vaudeville.





## CHAPTER XIII.

## IN BELGIUM.

BRUSSELS is Paris in miniature, and is one of the most charming cities I ever visited. We found elegant quarters, and the day after our arrival, we visited King Leopold and the Queen, by command, at their palace. The King and Queen had already seen the General in London, but they wished to present him to their children and to the distinguished persons whom we found assembled. After a most agreeable hour we came away, the General, as usual, receiving many fine presents.

The following day, I opened the exhibition in a beautiful hall, which on that day and on every afternoon and evening while we remained there, was crowded by throngs of the first people in the city. On the second or third day, in the midst of the exhibition, I suddenly missed the case containing the valuable presents the General had received from kings, queens, noblemen and gentlemen, and instantly gave the alarm; some thief had intruded for the express purpose of stealing these jewels, and in the crowd had been entirely successful in his object.

The police were notified, and I offered 2,000 francs reward for the recovery of the property. A day or two afterwards a man went into a jeweller's shop and offered for sale, among other things, a gold snuff-box, mounted with turquoises, and presented by the Duke of Devonshire to the General. The jeweller, seeing the General's initials on the box, sharply questioned the man, who became alarmed and ran out of the shop. An alarm was raised, and the man was caught. He made a clean breast of it, and in the course of a few hours the entire property was returned, to the great delight of the General and myself. Wherever we exhibited afterwards, no matter how respectable the audience, the case of presents was always carefully watched.



While I was in Brussels I could do no less than visit the battle-field of Waterloo, and I proposed that our party should be composed of Professor Pinte, Mr. Stratton, father of General Tom Thumb, Mr. H. G. Sherman and myself.

We engaged a coach and horses the night previous, and started punctually at the hour appointed. We stopped at the neat little church in the village of Waterloo, for the purpose of examining the tablets erected to the memory of some of the English who fell in the contest. Thence we passed to the house in which the leg of Lord Uxbridge (Marquis of Anglesey) was amputated. A neat little monument in the garden designates the spot where the shattered member had been interred. In the house is shown a part of the boot which is said to have once covered the unlucky leg. I expressed a desire to have a small piece of the boot to exhibit in my Museum; the lady cut off, without hesitation, a slip three inches long by one in width. I could not help thinking that if the lady was thus liberal in dispensing pieces of the "identical boot" to all visitors, this must have been about the ninety-nine thousandth boot that had been cut as the "Simon pure" since 1815.

Arriving at Mount Saint Jean, a quarter of a mile from the ground, we were beset by some eighteen or twenty persons, who offered their services as guides, to indicate the most important localities. Each applicant professed to know the exact spot where every man had been placed who had taken part in the battle, and each, of course, claimed to have been engaged in that sanguinary contest, although it had occurred thirty years before, and some of these fellows were only, it seemed, from twenty-five to twenty-eight years of age! We accepted an old man, who at first declared that he was killed in the battle, but, perceiving our looks of incredulity, consented to modify his statement so far as to assert that he was horribly wounded, and lay upon the ground three days before receiving assistance.

Once upon the ground, our guide, with much gravity, pointed out the place where the Duke of Wellington took his station during a great part of the action; the locality where the reserve of the British Army was stationed; the spot



where Napoleon placed his favourite Guard; the little mound on which was erected a temporary observatory for his use during the battle; the portion of the field at which Blücher entered with the Prussian army; the precise location of the Scotch Greys; the spot where fell Sir Alexander Gordon, Lieut. Col. Canning, and many others of celebrity. I asked him if he could tell me where Captain Tippitwichet, of the Connecticut Fusiliers, was killed. "Oui, Monsieur," he replied, with perfect confidence, for he felt bound to know, or to pretend to know, every particular. He then proceeded to point out exactly the spot where my unfortunate Connecticut friend had breathed his last. After indicating the locations where some twenty more fictitious friends from Coney Island, New Jersey, Cape Cod and Saratoga Springs, had given up the ghost, we handed him his commission and declined to give him further trouble.

Upon quitting the battle-field we were accosted by a dozen persons of both sexes with baskets on their arms or bags in their hands, containing relics of the battle for sale. These consisted of a great variety of implements of war, pistols, bullets, &c., besides brass French eagles, buttons, &c. I purchased a number of them for the Museum, and Stratton was equally liberal in obtaining a supply for his friends in "Old Bridgeport." We also purchased maps of the battle-ground, pictures of the triumphal mound surmounted by the colossal Belgic Lion in bronze, &c., &c. These frequent and renewed taxations annoyed Stratton very much, and, as he handed out a five-franc piece for a "complete guide-book," he remarked, that "he guessed the battle of Waterloo had cost a darned sight more since it was fought than it did before!"

But his misfortunes did not terminate here. When we had proceeded four or five miles upon our road home, crash went the carriage. We alighted and found that the axle-tree was broken. It was now a quarter-past one o'clock. The little General's exhibition was advertised to commence in Brussels at two o'clock, and could not take place without us. We were unable to walk the distance in double the time at our disposal, and, as no carriage was to be got in that part of the country, I concluded to take the matter easy, and forego all idea of ex-



hibiting before evening. Stratton, however, could not bear the thought of losing the chance of taking in six or eight hundred francs, and he determined to take matters in hand, in order, if possible, to get our party into Brussels in time to save the afternoon exhibition. He hastened to a farmhouse, accompanied by the interpreter, Professor Pinte, Sherman and myself leisurely bringing up the rear. Stratton asked the old farmer if he had a carriage. He had not. "Have you no vehicle?" he inquired.

"Yes, I have that vehicle," he replied, pointing to an old cart filled with manure, and standing in his barn-yard.

"Thunder! is that all the conveyance you have got?" asked Stratton. Being assured that it was, Stratton concluded that it was better to ride in a manure-cart than not to get to Brussels in time.

"What will you ask to drive us to Brussels in three-quarters of an hour?" demanded Stratton.

"It is impossible," replied the farmer; "I should want two hours for my horse to do it in."

"But ours is a very pressing case, and if we are not there in time we lose more than five hundred francs," said Stratton.

The old farmer pricked up his ears at this, and agreed to get us to Brussels in an hour, for eighty francs. Stratton tried to beat him down, but it was of no use.

"Oh, go it, Stratton," said Sherman; "eighty francs you know is only sixteen dollars, and you will probably save a hundred by it, for I expect a full house at our afternoon exhibition to-day."

"But I have already spent about ten dollars for nonsense," said Stratton, "and we shall have to pay for the broken carriage besides."

"But what can you do better?" chimed in Professor Pinte.

"It is an outrageous extortion to charge sixteen dollars for an old horse and cart to go ten miles. Why, in old Bridgeport I could get it done for three dollars," replied Stratton, in a tone of vexation.

"It is the custom of the country," said Professor Pinte, "and we must submit to it."



"Well, it's a thundering mean custom, anyhow," said Stratton, "and I won't stand such imposition."

"But what shall we do?" earnestly inquired Mr. Pinte. "It may be a high price, but it is better to pay that than lose our afternoon performance and five or six hundred francs."

This appeal to the pocket touched Stratton's feelings; so, submitting to the extortion, he replied to our interpreter: "Well, tell the old robber to dump his dung-cart as soon as possible, or we shall lose half an hour in starting."

The cart was "dumped" and a large, lazy-looking Flemish horse was attached to it with a rope harness. Some boards were laid across the cart for seats, the party tumbled into the rustic vehicle, a red-haired boy, son of the old farmer, mounted the horse, and Stratton gave orders to "get along." "Wait a moment," said the farmer, "you have not paid me yet." "I'll pay your boy when we get to Brussels, provided he gets there within the hour," replied Stratton.

"Oh, he is sure to get there in an hour," said the farmer, "but I can't let him go unless you pay in advance." The minutes were flying rapidly, the anticipated loss of the day exhibition of General Tom Thumb flitted before his eyes, and Stratton, in very desperation, thrust his hand into his pocket and drew forth sixteen five-franc pieces, which he dropped, one at a time, into the hand of the farmer, and then called out to the boy, "There now, do try to see if you can go ahead."

The boy did go ahead, but it was with such a snail's pace that it would have puzzled a man of tolerable eyesight to have determined whether the horse was moving or standing still. To make it still more interesting, it commenced raining furiously. As we had left Brussels in a coach, and the morning had promised us a pleasant day, we had omitted our umbrellas. We were soon soaked to the skin. We "grinned and bore it" awhile without grumbling. At length Stratton, who was almost too angry to speak, desired Mr. Pinte to ask the red-haired boy if he expected to walk his horse all the way to Brussels.

"Certainly," replied the boy; "he is too big and fat to do anything but walk. We never trot him."



Stratton was terrified as he thought of the loss of the day exhibition; and he cursed the boy, the cart, the rain, the luck, and even the battle of Waterloo itself. But it was all of no use, the horse would not run, but the rain did—down our backs.

At two o'clock, the time appointed for our exhibition, we were yet some seven miles from Brussels. The horse walked slowly and philosophically through the pitiless storm, the steam majestically rising from the old manure-cart, to the no small disturbance of our unfortunate olfactories. "It will take two hours to get to Brussels at this rate," growled Stratton' "Oh, no," replied the boy, "it will only take about two hours from the time we started."

"But your father agreed to get us there in an hour," answered Stratton.

"I know it," responded the boy, "but he knew it would take more than two."

"I'll sue you for damage, by thunder!" said Stratton.

"Oh, there would be no use in that," chimed in Mr. Pinte, "for you could get no satisfaction in this country."

"But I shall lose more than a hundred dollars by being two hours instead of one," said Stratton.

"They care nothing about that; all they care for is your eighty francs," remarked Pinte.

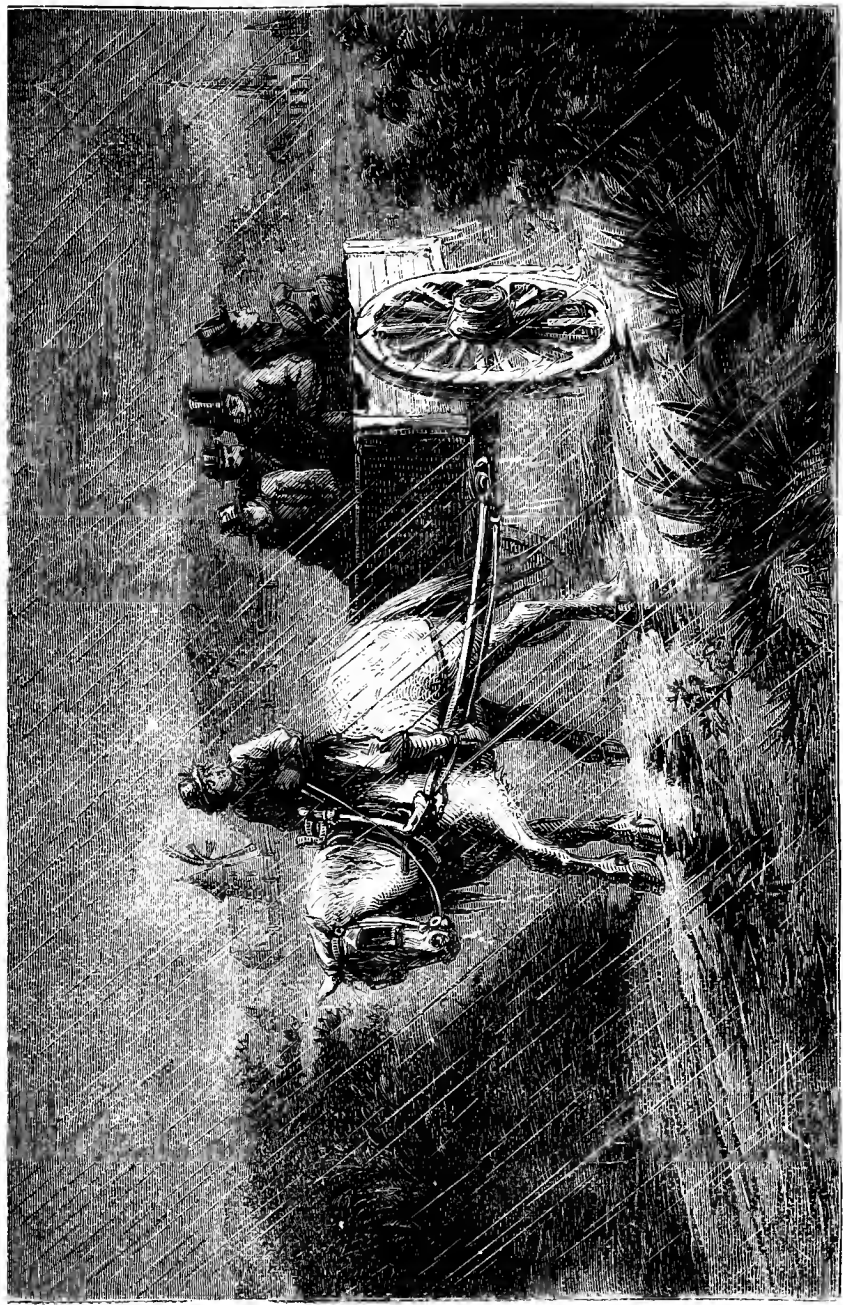
"But they have lied and swindled me," replied Stratton.

"Oh, you must not mind that; it is the custom of the country."

All things will finally have an end, and our party did at length actually arrive in Brussels, cart and all, in precisely two hours and a half from the time we left the farmer's house. Of course we were too late to exhibit the little General. Hundreds of visitors had gone away disappointed.

Several months subsequent to our visit to Waterloo, I was in Birmingham, and there made the acquaintance of a firm who manufactured to order, and sent to Waterloo, barrels of "relics" every year. At Waterloo these "relics" are planted and in due time dug up, and sold at large prices, as precious remembrances of the great battle. Our Waterloo purchases looked rather cheap after this discovery.





MANURE CART EXPRESS.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## IN ENGLAND AGAIN.

IN London the General again opened his levées in the Egyptian Hall with increased success. His unbounded popularity on the Continent, and his receptions by King Louis Philippe, of France, and King Leopold, of Belgium, had added greatly to his prestige and fame. Those who had seen him when he was in London months before, came to see him again, and new visitors crowded by thousands to the General's levées.

Besides giving these daily entertainments, the General appeared occasionally for an hour, during the intermissions, at some place in the suburbs; and for a long time he appeared every day at the Surrey Zoological Gardens, under the direction of the proprietor, my particular friend, Mr. W. Tyler. This place subsequently became celebrated for its great music hall, in which Spurgeon, the sensational preacher, first attained his notoriety. The place was always crowded, and when the General had gone through with his performances on the little stage, in order that all might see him, he was put into a balloon, which, secured by ropes, was then passed around the ground, just above the people's heads. Some forty men managed the ropes and prevented the balloon from rising, but, one day, a sudden gust of wind took the balloon fairly out of the hands of half the men who had hold of the ropes, while others were lifted from the ground, and had not an alarm been instantly given, which called at least two hundred to the rescue, the little General would have been lost.

In October, 1844, I made my first return visit to the United States, leaving General Tom Thumb in England, in the hands of an accomplished and faithful agent. One of the principal reasons for my return at this time was my anxiety to renew the Museum building lease, although my first lease of five years had still three years longer to run.



Having completed my business arrangements in New York, I returned to England with my wife and daughters, and hired a house in London. My house was the scene of constant hospitality, which I extended to my numerous friends in return for the many attentions shown to me. It seemed then as if I had more and stronger friends in London than in New York. I had met and had been introduced to "almost everybody who was anybody," and among them all, some of the best soon became to me much more than mere acquaintances.

Among the distinguished people whom I met, I was introduced to the poet-banker, Samuel Rogers. I saw him at a dinner party at the residence of the American minister, the Honourable Edward Everett. As we were going into dinner, I stepped aside, so that Mr. Rogers, who was tottering along leaning on the arm of a friend, could go in before me, when Mr. Rogers said :

"Pass in, Mr. Barnum, pass in; I always consider it an honour to follow an American."

When our three months' engagement at the Egyptian Hall had expired, I arranged for a protracted provincial tour through Great Britain. I had made a flying visit to Scotland before we went to Paris—mainly to procure the beautiful Scotch costumes, daggers, &c., which were carefully made for the General at Edinburgh, and to teach the General the Scotch dances, with a bit of the Scotch dialect which added so much to the interest of his exhibitions in Paris and elsewhere. My second visit to Scotland for the purpose of giving exhibitions extended as far as Aberdeen.

In England we went to Manchester, Birmingham, and to almost every city, town and even village of importance. We travelled by post much of the time—that is, I had a suitable carriage made for my party, and a van which conveyed the General's carriage, ponies, and such other "property" as was needed for our levées. This mode of travelling was not only very comfortable and independent, but it enabled us to visit many out-of-the-way places, off from the great lines of travel, and in such places we gave some of our most successful exhibitions. We also used the railway lines freely, leaving our



carriages at any station, and taking them up again when we returned.

I remember once making an extraordinary effort to reach a branch line station, where I meant to leave my teams and take the rail for Rugby. I had a time-table, and knew at what hour exactly I could hit the train ; but, unfortunately, the axle to my carriage broke, and as an hour was lost in repairing it, I lost exactly an hour in reaching the station. The train had long been gone, and I must be in Rugby, where we had advertised a performance. I stormed around till I found the superintendent, and told him "I must instantly have an extra train to Rugby."

"Extra train?" said he, with surprise and a half sneer, "extra train? Why, you can't have an extra train to Rugby for less than sixty pounds."

"Is that all!" I asked; "well, get up your train immediately and here are your sixty pounds. What in the world are sixty pounds to me, when I wish to go to Rugby, or elsewhere, in a hurry!"

The astonished superintendent took the money, bustled about, and the train was soon ready. He was greatly puzzled to know what distinguished person—he thought he must be dealing with some prince, or at least a duke—was willing to give so much money to save a few hours of time, and he hesitatingly asked whom he had the honour of serving.

"General Tom Thumb."

We reached Rugby in time to give our performance, as announced, and our receipts were £160, which quite covered the expense of our extra train and left a handsome margin for profit.

When we were in Oxford, a dozen or more of the students came to the conclusion that, as the General was a little fellow, the admission fee to his entertainments should be paid in the smallest kind of money. They accordingly provided themselves with farthings, and as each man entered, instead of handing in a shilling for his ticket, he laid down forty-eight farthings. The counting of these small coins was a great annoyance to Mr. Stratton, the General's father, who was ticket-seller, and after counting two or three handfuls, vexed



at the delay which was preventing a crowd of ladies and gentlemen from buying tickets, Mr. Stratton lost his temper and cried out :

"Blast your quarter-pennies ! I am not going to count them ! You chaps who haven't bigger money can chuck your copper into my hat and walk in."

Mr. Stratton was a genuine Yankee, and thoroughly conversant with the Yankee vernacular, which he used freely. In exhibiting the General, I often said to visitors, that Tom Thumb's parents, and the rest of the family, were persons of the ordinary size, and that the gentleman who presided in the ticket-office was the General's father. This made poor Stratton an object of no little curiosity, and he was pestered with all sorts of questions. On one occasion an old dowager said to him :

"Are you really the father of General Tom Thumb ?"

"Wa'al," replied Stratton, "I have to support him ?"

This evasive answer is common enough in New England, but the literal dowager had her doubts, and promptly rejoined :

"I rather think he supports you !"

While in London, my friend Albert Smith, a jolly companion, as well as a witty and sensible author, promised that when I reached Birmingham he would come and spend a day with me in "sight-seeing," including a visit to the house in which Shakespeare was born.

Early one morning in the autumn of 1844, my friend Smith and myself took the box seat of an English mail-coach, and were soon whirling at the rate of twelve miles an hour over the magnificent road leading from Birmingham to Stratford. The distance is thirty miles. At a little village four miles from Stratford, we found that the fame of the Bard of Avon, had travelled thus far, for we noticed a sign over a miserable barber's shop, "Shakespeare hair-dressing—a good shave for a penny." In twenty minutes more we were set down at the door of the Red Horse Hotel, in Stratford. The coachman and guard were each paid half a crown as their perquisites.

While breakfast was preparing, we called for a guide-book to the town, and the waiter brought in a book, saying that



we should find in it the best description extant of the birth and burial-place of Shakespeare. I was not a little proud to find this volume to be no other than the "Sketch-Book" of our illustrious countryman, Washington Irving; and, in glancing over his humorous description of the place, I discovered that he had stopped at the same hotel where we were then awaiting breakfast.

After examining the Shakespeare House, as well as the tomb and the church in which all that is mortal of the great poet rests, we ordered a post-chaise for Warwick Castle.

The distance to Warwick is fourteen miles. We went to the Castle, and, approaching the door of the Great Hall, were informed by a well-dressed servant that the Earl of Warwick and family were absent, and that he was permitted to show the apartments to visitors. He introduced us successively into "The Red Drawing-Room," "The Cedar Drawing-Room," "The Gilt-Room," "The State Bed-Room," "Lady Warwick's Boudoir," "The Compass-Room," "The Chapel," and the "Great Dining-Room." As we passed out of the Castle, the polite porter touched his head (he of course had no hat on it) in a style which spoke plainer than words, "Half-a-crown each, if you please, gentlemen." We responded to the call, and were then placed in charge of another guide, who took us to the top of "Guy's Tower," at the bottom of which he touched his hat a shilling's-worth; and placing ourselves in charge of a third conductor, an old man of seventy, we proceeded to the Greenhouse to see the Warwick Vase—each guide announcing at the end of his short tour: "Gentlemen, I go no farther," and indicating that the bill for his services was to be paid. The old gentleman mounted a rostrum at the side of the vase, and commenced a set speech, which we began to fear was interminable; so, tossing him the usual fee, we left him in the middle of his oration.

Passing through the porter's lodge on our way out, under the impression that we had seen all that was interesting, the old porter informed us that the most curious things connected with the Castle were to be seen in his lodge. Feeling for our coin, we bade him produce his relics, and he showed



us a lot of trumpery, which he gravely informed us belonged to that hero of antiquity, Guy, Earl of Warwick. Among these were his sword, shield, helmet, breast-plate, walking-staff, and tilting-pole, each of enormous size—the horse armour, nearly large enough for an elephant, a large pot which would hold seventy gallons, called “Guy’s Porridge Pot,” his flesh-fork, the size of a farmer’s hay-fork, his lady’s stirrups, the rib of a mastodon, which the porter pretended belonged to the great “Dun Cow,” which, according to tradition, haunted a ditch near Coventry, and, after doing injury to many persons, was slain by the valiant Guy. The sword weighed nearly two hundred pounds, and the armour four hundred pounds.

I told the old porter he was entitled to great credit for having concentrated more lies than I had ever before heard in so small a compass. He smiled, and evidently felt gratified by the compliment.

“I suppose,” I continued, “that you have told these marvellous stories so often that you believe them yourself?”

“Almost,” replied the porter, with a grin of satisfaction that showed he was “up to snuff,” and had really earned two shillings.

“Come, now, old fellow,” said I, “what will you take for the entire lot of those traps? I want them for my Museum in America.”

“No money would buy these valuable historical mementoes of a by-gone age,” replied the old porter, with a leer.

“Never mind,” I exclaimed, “I’ll have them duplicated for my Museum, so that Americans can see them and avoid the necessity of coming here, and in that way I’ll burst up your show.”

Albert Smith laughed immoderately at the astonishment of the porter when I made this threat, and I was greatly amused some years afterwards, when Albert Smith became a successful showman and was exhibiting his “Mont Blanc” to delighted audiences in London, to discover that he had introduced this very incident into his lecture, of course, changing the names and locality. He often confessed that he derived his very first idea of becoming a showman from my talk



about the business and my doings, on this charming day when we visited Warwick.

We returned to the hotel, took a post-chaise, and drove through decidedly the most lovely country I ever beheld. Since taking that tour, I have heard that two gentlemen once made a bet, each that he could name the most delightful drive in England. Many persons were present, and each gentleman wrote on a separate slip of paper the scene which he most admired. One gentleman wrote, "The road from Warwick to Coventry;" the other had written, "The road from Coventry to Warwick."

In less than an hour we were set down at the outer walls of Kenilworth Castle. This once noble and magnificent castle is now a stupendous ruin, which has been so often described that I think it unnecessary to say anything about it here. We spent half an hour in examining the interesting ruins, and then proceeded by post-chaise to Coventry, a distance of six or eight miles. Here we visited St. Mary's Hall, which has attracted the notice of many antiquaries. We also took our own "peep" at the effigy of the celebrated "Peeping Tom," after which we visited an exhibition called the "Happy Family," consisting of about two hundred birds and animals of opposite natures and propensities, all living in harmony together in one cage. This exhibition was so remarkable that I bought it and hired the proprietor to accompany it to New York, and it became an attractive feature in my Museum.

We took the cars the same evening for Birmingham, where we arrived at ten o'clock, Albert Smith remarking, that never before in his life had he accomplished a day's journey on the Yankee go-ahead principle.

While visiting the house in which Shakespcare was born, I conceived the idea of purchasing, removing, and re-erecting that building in New York. Americans appreciate the immortal Bard of Avon as keenly as do their brethren in the "Mother Country" (a "Mother" of whom we are all justly proud), and I greatly desired to honour the New World by erecting this invaluable relic in its commercial metropolis. I soon despatched a trusty agent to Stratford-on-Avon, armed with the cash and full powers to buy the Shakespeare



House if possible, and to have it carefully taken down, packed in boxes, and shipped to New York. He was cautioned not to whisper my name, and to give no hint that the building was ever to leave England. After weeks of delay, the parties having control of the property consented to name a price which they thought they would accept for the Shakespeare House—"to be taken down."

Before my agent received my letter from France, enclosing a draft on Messrs. Baring Brothers, the London Bankers, for the amount of purchase money, some English gentlemen got wind of the transaction, and bought the house.

If my agent could have bought and paid for it in time, and secured a receipt for the money, I fancy there would have been an excitement and use of "printer's ink" equalling that caused by my purchasing the great African elephant "Jumbo" from the London "Zoo," thirty-eight years later.





## CHAPTER XV.

## RETURN TO AMERICA.

WHILE I was at Aberdeen, in Scotland, I met Anderson, the "Wizard of the North." I had known him for a long time, and we were on familiar terms. He came to our exhibition, and, at the close, we went to the hotel together to get a little supper. After supper we were having some fun and jokes together, when it occurred to Anderson to introduce me to several persons who were sitting in the room as the "Wizard of the North," at the same time asking me about my tricks and my forthcoming exhibition. He kept this up so persistently that some of our friends who were present declared that Anderson was "too much for me," and, meanwhile, fresh introductions to strangers who came in had made me pretty generally known in that circle as the "Wizard of the North," who was to astonish the town in the following week. I accepted the situation at last, and said :

"Well, gentlemen, as I perform here for the first time on Monday evening, I like to be liberal, and I should be very happy to give orders of admission to those of you who will attend my exhibition."

The applications for orders were quite general, and I had written thirty or forty, when Anderson, who saw that I was in a fair way of filling his house with "deadheads," cried out :

"Hold on! I am the 'Wizard of the North.' I'll stand the orders already given, but not another one."

Our friends, including the "Wizard" himself, began to think that I had rather the best of the joke.

During our three years' stay abroad, I made a second hasty visit to America, leaving the General in England in the hands of my agents.

We had visited nearly every city and town in France and Belgium, all the principal places in England and Scotland, besides going to Belfast and Dublin, in Ireland. I had



several times met Daniel O'Connell in private life, and in the Irish capital I heard him make an eloquent and powerful public Repeal speech in Conciliation Hall. In Dublin, after exhibiting a week in Rotunda Hall, our receipts on the last day were £261, or \$1,305; and the General also received £50, or \$250, for playing the same evening at the Theatre Royal. Thus closing a truly triumphant tour, we set sail for New York, arriving in February, 1847.

One of my main objects in returning home at this time was to obtain a longer lease of the premises occupied by the American Museum. My lease had still three years to run, but Mr. Olmsted, the proprietor of the building, was dead, and I was anxious to make provision in time for the perpetuity of my establishment, for I meant to make the Museum a permanent institution in the city, and if I could not renew my lease, I intended to build an appropriate edifice on Broadway. I finally succeeded, however, in getting the lease of the entire building, covering fifty-six feet by one hundred, for twenty-five years, at an annual rent of \$10,000 dollars, and the ordinary taxes and assessments. I had already hired, in addition, the upper stories of three adjoining buildings. My Museum receipts were more in one day than they formerly were in an entire week, and the establishment had become so popular that it was thronged at all hours, from early morning till closing time at night.

On my return, I promptly made use of General Tom Thumb's European reputation. He immediately appeared in the American Museum, and for four weeks drew such crowds of visitors as had never been seen there before. He afterwards spent a month in Bridgeport with his kindred. To prevent being annoyed by the curious, who would be sure to throng the houses of his relatives, he exhibited two days at Bridgeport, and the receipts, amounting to several hundred dollars, were presented to the Bridgeport Charitable Society.

We proceeded to Washington city, where the General held his levées in 1847, visiting President Polk and lady at the White House: thence to Richmond, returning to Baltimore and Philadelphia. Our receipts in Philadelphia in twelve days were \$5,594.91. The tour for the entire year



realised about the same average. The expenses were from twenty-five dollars to thirty dollars per day. From Philadelphia we went to Boston, Lowell, and Providence. Our receipts on one day in the latter city were \$976.97. We then visited New Bedford, Fall River, Salem, Worcester, Springfield, Albany, Troy, Niagara Falls, Buffalo, and intermediate places, and in returning to New York we stopped at the principal towns on the Hudson River. After this we visited New Haven, Hartford, Portland, Me., and intermediate towns.

I was surprised to find that, during my long absence abroad, I had become very much of a curiosity to my patrons. If I showed myself about the Museum or wherever else I was known, I found eyes peering and fingers pointing at me, and could frequently overhear the remark, "There's Barnum." On one occasion soon after my return, I was sitting in the ticket-office reading a newspaper. A man came and purchased a ticket of admission. "Is Mr. Barnum in the Museum?" he asked. The ticket-seller, pointing to me, answered, "This is Mr. Barnum." Supposing the gentleman had business with me, I looked up from the paper. "Is this Mr. Barnum?" he asked. "It is," I replied. He stared at me for a moment, and then, throwing down his ticket, exclaimed, "It's all right; I have got the worth of my money," and away he went, without going into the Museum at all!

In November, 1847, we started for Havana, taking the steamer from New York to Charleston, where the General exhibited, as well as at Columbia, Augusta, Savannah, Milledgeville, Macon, Columbus, Montgomery, Mobile, and New Orleans. At this latter city we remained three weeks, including Christmas and New Year's. We arrived at Havana by the schooner *Adams Gray*, in January, 1848, and were introduced to the Captain General and the Spanish nobility. We remained a month in Havana and Matanzas, the General proving an immense favourite. In Havana he was the especial pet of Count Santovania.

From New Orleans we proceeded to St. Louis, stopping at the principal towns on the Mississippi river, and returning *via* Louisville, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh. We reached the



latter city early in May, 1848. From this point it was agreed between Mr. Stratton and myself that I should go home, and henceforth travel no more with the little General. I had competent agents who could exhibit him without my personal assistance, and I preferred to relinquish a portion of the profits rather than continue to be a travelling showman.

My new home at Bridgeport, Connecticut, which was then nearly ready for occupancy, was the well-known Iranistan. More than two years had been employed in building this beautiful residence.

I wished to reside within a few hours of New York. I had never seen more delightful locations than there are upon the borders of Long Island Sound, between New Rochelle, New York, and New Haven, Connecticut; and my attention was therefore turned in that direction. Bridgeport seemed to be about the proper distance from the great metropolis. It is pleasantly situated at the terminus of two railroads, which traverse the fertile valleys of the Naugatuck and Housatonic rivers. The New York and New Haven Railroad runs through the city, and there is also daily steamboat communication with New York. The enterprise which characterised the city, seemed to mark it as destined to become the first in the State in size and opulence; and I was not long in deciding, with the concurrence of my wife, to fix our future residence in that vicinity.

I accordingly purchased seventeen acres of land, less than a mile west of the city, and fronting with a good view upon the Sound.

In visiting Brighton, in England, I had been greatly pleased with the Pavilion erected by George IV. It was the only specimen of Oriental architecture in England, and the style had not been introduced into America. I concluded to adopt it, and engaged a London architect to furnish me a set of drawings after the general plan of the Pavilion, differing sufficiently to be adapted to the spot of ground selected for my homestead. On my second return visit to the United States, I brought these drawings with me, and engaged a competent architect and builder, giving him instructions to proceed with the work, not "by the job" but "by the day,"



and to spare neither time nor expense in erecting a comfortable, convenient, and tasteful residence. The work was thus begun and continued while I was still abroad, and during the time when I was making my tour with General Tom Thumb through the United States and Cuba. Elegant and appropriate furniture was made expressly for every room in the house. I erected expensive waterworks to supply the premises. The stables, conservatories, and out-buildings were perfect in their kind. There was a profusion of trees set out on the grounds. The whole was built and established literally "regardless of expense," for I had no desire even to ascertain the entire cost.

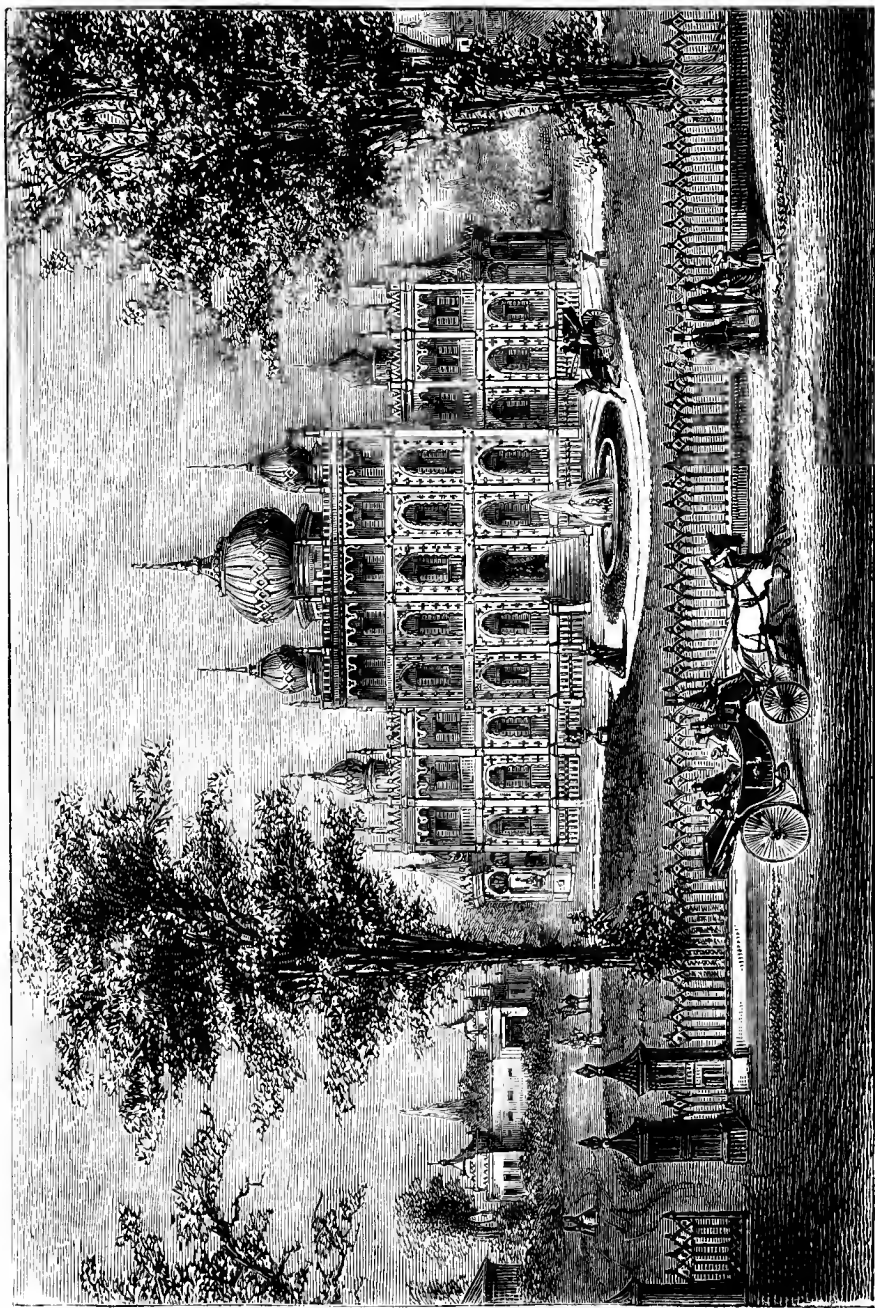
The whole was finally completed to my satisfaction. My family removed into the premises, and, on the fourteenth of November, 1848, nearly one thousand invited guests, including the poor and the rich, helped us in the old-fashioned custom of "house-warming."

When the name "Iranistan" was announced, a waggish New York editor syllabled it, I-ran-i-stan, and gave as the interpretation, that "I ran a long time before I could stan'!" Literally, however, the name signifies, "Eastern Country Place," or, more poetically, "Oriental Villa."

The years 1848 and 1849 were mainly spent with my family, though I went every week to New York to look after the interests of the American Museum. While I was in Europe, in 1845, my agent, Mr. Fordyce Hitchcock, had bought out for me the Baltimore Museum, a fully-supplied establishment, in full operation, and I placed it under the charge of my uncle, Alanson Taylor. He died in 1846, and I then sold the Baltimore Museum to the "Orphean Family," by whom it was subsequently transferred to Mr. John E. Owens, the celebrated comedian. After my return from Europe, I opened, in 1849, a museum in Dr. Swaim's fine building, at the corner of Chestnut and Seventh Streets, in Philadelphia.

I stayed in Philadelphia long enough to identify myself with this Museum and to successfully start the enterprise, and then left it in the hands of different managers, who profitably conducted it till 1851, when finding that it occupied too much of my time and attention, I sold it to Mr. Clapp Spooner for





IRANISTAN.



\$40,000. At the end of that year, the building and contents were destroyed by fire.

While my Philadelphia Muscum was in full operation, Peale's Philadelphia Museum ran me a strong opposition at the Masonic Hall. Peale's enterprise proved disastrous, and I purchased the collection at sheriff's sale for five or six thousand dollars, on joint account of my friend, Moses Kimball, and myself. The curiosities were equally divided, one-half going to his Boston Museum and the other half to my American Museum in New York.

In 1848, I was elected President of the Fairfield County Agricultural Society in Connecticut. Although not practically a farmer, I had purchased about one hundred acres of land in the vicinity of my residence, and felt and still feel a deep interest in the cause of agriculture. I had begun by importing some blood stock for Iranistan, and, as I was at one time attacked by the "hen fever," I erected several splendid poultry-houses on my grounds.

In 1849 it was determined by the Society that I should deliver the annual address. I begged to be excused on the ground of incompetency, but my excuses were of no avail, and, as I could not instruct my auditors in farming, I gave them the benefit of several mistakes which I had committed. Among other things, I told them that in the fall of 1848 my head-gardener reported that I had fifty bushels of potatoes to spare. I thereupon directed him to barrel them up and ship them to New York for sale. He did so, and received two dollars per barrel, or about sixty-seven cents per bushel. But, unfortunately, after the potatoes had been shipped, I found that my gardener had selected all the largest for the market, and left my family nothing but "small potatoes" to live on during the winter. But the worst is still to come. My potatoes were all gone before March, and I was obliged to buy, during the spring, over fifty bushels of potatoes, at \$1.25 per bushel! I also related my first experiment in the arboricultural line, when I cut from two thrifty rows of young cherry-trees any quantity of what I supposed to be "suckers" or "sprouts," and was thereafter informed by my gardener that I had cut off all his grafts!



I owned several acres of land a quarter of a mile distant from Iranistan and adjoining the fine homestead of my friend Mr. James D. Johnson.

This ground I surrounded with high pickets, and, introducing a number of Rocky Mountain elk, reindeer, and American deer, I converted it into a deer park. Strangers passing by would naturally suppose that it belonged to Johnson's estate, and to render the illusion more complete, he placed a sign in the park fronting the street, and reading :

"ALL PERSONS ARE FORBID TRESPASSING ON THESE GROUNDS,  
OR DISTURBING THE DEER.

"J. D. JOHNSON."

I "acknowledged the corn," and was much pleased with the joke. Johnson was delighted, and bragged considerably of having got ahead of Barnum, and the sign remained undisturbed for several days. It happened at length that a party of friends came to visit him from New York, arriving in the evening. Johnson told them he had got a capital joke on Barnum ; he would not explain, but said they should see it for themselves next morning. Bright and early he led them into the street, and, after conducting them a proper distance, wheeled them around in front of the sign. To his dismay he discovered that I had added directly under his name the words "*Gamekeeper to P. T. Barnum.*"

Thereafter, Mr. Johnson was known among his friends and acquaintances as "Barnum's gamekeeper." Some time afterwards, when I was President of the Pequonnock Bank, it was my custom every year to give a grand dinner at Iranistan, to the directors, and in making preparations I used to send to certain friends in the West for prairie chickens and other game. On one occasion, a large box, marked "P. T. Barnum, Bridgeport ; Game," was lying in the express office, when Johnson, seeing it and espying the word "game," said :

"Look here ! I am 'Barnum's gamekeeper,' and I'll take charge of this box."

And "take charge" of it he did, carrying it home and notifying me that it was in his possession, and that, as he was my gamekeeper, he would "keep" this, unless I sent him an



order for a new hat. He knew very well that I would give fifty dollars rather than be deprived of the box, and as he also threatened to give a game dinner at his own house, I speedily sent the order for the hat, acknowledged the good joke, and my own guests enjoyed the double "game."





## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE JENNY LIND ENTERPRISE.

AND now I come to speak of an undertaking which all will admit was bold in its conception, complete in its development, and astounding in its success. That I am proud of it, I freely confess. It placed me before the world in a new light; it gained me many warm friends in new circles; it was in itself a fortune to me—I risked much, but I made more.

It was in October, 1849, that I conceived the idea of bringing Jenny Lind to this country. I had never heard her sing, inasmuch as she arrived in London a few weeks after I left that city with General Tom Thumb. Her reputation, however, was sufficient for me.

I despatched an agent to Lubeck, in Germany, and engaged Miss Lind, in the terms shown in the following extracts from our written agreement:

"Second. In consideration of said services, the said John Hall Wilton, as agent for the said Phineas T. Barnum, of New York, agrees to furnish the said Jenny Lind with a servant as waiting-maid, and a male servant to and for the sole service of her and her party; to pay the travelling and hotel expenses of a friend to accompany her as a companion; to pay also a secretary to superintend her finances; to pay all her and her party's travelling expenses from Europe, and during the tour in the United States of North America and Havana; to pay all hotel expenses for board and lodging during the same period; to place at her disposal, in each city, a carriage and horses with their necessary attendants, and to give her in addition, the sum of Two Hundred Pounds sterling, or One Thousand Dollars, for each concert or oratorio in which the said Jenny Lind shall sing.

"Fifth. And the said John Hall Wilton, agent for the said Phineas T. Barnum, at the request of the said Jenny Lind, agrees to pay to Julius Benedict, of London, to accompany the said Jenny Lind as musical director, pianist, and superintendent of the musical department, also to assist the said Jenny Lind, in one hundred and fifty concerts or oratorios, to be given in the United States of North America and Havana, the sum of Five Thousand Pounds (£5,000) sterling, to be satisfactorily secured to him with Messrs. Baring Brothers, of London, previous to his departure from Europe; and



the said John Hall Wilton agrees further, for the said Phineas T. Barnum to pay all his travelling expenses from Europe, together with his hotel and travelling expenses during the time occupied in giving the aforesaid one hundred and fifty concerts or oratorios—he, the said Julius Benedict, to superintend the organisation of oratorios, if required.

“Sixth. And the said John Hall Wilton, at the request, selection, and for the aid of the said Jenny Lind, agrees to pay to Giovanni Belletti, baritone vocalist, to accompany the said Jenny Lind during her tour and in one hundred and fifty concerts or oratorios in the United States of North America and Havana, and in conjunction with the aforesaid Julius Benedict, the sum of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pounds (£2,500) sterling, to be satisfactorily secured to him previous to his departure from Europe, in addition to all his hotel and travelling expenses.

I then began to prepare the public mind, through the newspapers, for the reception of the great songstress. How effectually this was done, is still within the remembrance of the American public.

After getting together all my available funds for the purpose of transmitting them to London in the shape of United States bonds, I found a considerable sum still lacking to make up the amount. I had some second mortgages which were perfectly good, but I could not negotiate them in Wall Street. Nothing would answer there short of first mortgages on New York or Brooklyn city property.

I went to the president of the bank where I had done all my business for eight years. I offered him, as security for a loan, my second mortgages, and as an additional inducement, I proposed to make over to him my contract with Jenny Lind, with a written guarantee that he should appoint a receiver, who, at my expense, should take charge of all the receipts over and above three thousand dollars per night, and appropriate them towards the payment of my loan. He laughed in my face, and said: “Mr. Barnum, it is generally believed in Wall Street, that your engagement with Jenny Lind will ruin you. I do not think you will ever receive so much as three thousand dollars at a single concert.” I was indignant at his want of appreciation, and answered him that I would not at that moment take 150,000 dollars for my contract; nor would I. I found, upon further inquiry, that it was useless in Wall Street to offer the “Nightingale” in exchange for Goldfinches.



I, finally, was introduced to Mr. John L. Aspinwall, of the firm of Messrs. Howland and Aspinwall, and he gave me a letter of credit from his firm on Baring Brothers, for a large sum on collateral securities, which a spirit of genuine respect for my enterprise induced him to accept.

On Wednesday morning, August 21, 1850, Jenny Lind and Messrs. Benedict and Belletti, set sail from Liverpool in the steamship *Atlantic* accompanied by my agent, Mr. Wilton, and also by Miss Ahmansen and Mr. Max Hjortzberg, cousins of Miss Lind, the latter being her secretary; also by her two servants, and the valet of Messrs. Benedict and Belletti.

It was expected that the steamer would arrive on Sunday, September 1, but, determined to meet the songstress on her arrival whenever it might be, I went to Staten Island on Saturday, and slept at the hospitable residence of my friend, Dr. A. Sidney Doane, who was at that time the Health Officer of the Port of New York. A few minutes before twelve on Sunday morning, the *Atlantic* hove in sight, and immediately afterwards, through the kindness of my friend Doane, I was on board the ship, and had taken Jenny Lind by the hand.

After a few moments' conversation, she asked me when and where I had heard her sing.

"I never had the pleasure of seeing you before in my life," I replied.

"How is it possible that you dared risk so much money on a person whom you never heard sing?" she asked in surprise.

"I risked it on your reputation, which in musical matters I would much rather trust than my own judgment," I replied.

I may as well state, that although I relied prominently upon Jenny Lind's reputation as a great musical *artiste*, I also took largely into my estimate of her success with all classes of the American public, her character for extraordinary benevolence and generosity. Without this peculiarity in her disposition, I never would have dared make the engagement which I did, as I felt sure that there were multitudes of individuals in America who would be prompted to attend her concerts by this feeling alone.

Thousands of persons covered the shipping and piers, and

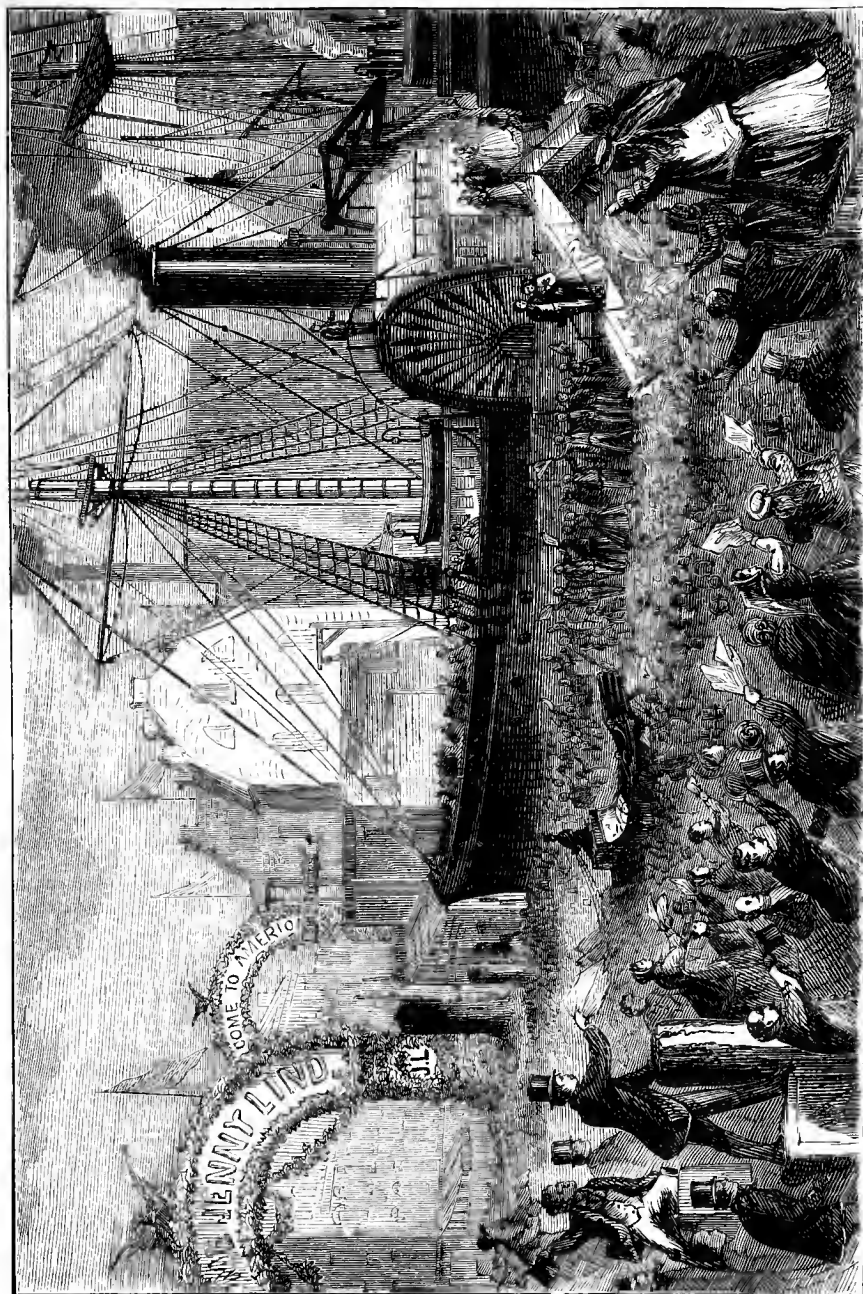


other thousands had congregated on the wharf at Canal Street, to see her. The wildest enthusiasm prevailed as the steamer approached the dock. A bower of green trees, decorated with beautiful flags, was discovered on the wharf, together with two triumphal arches, on one of which was inscribed "Welcome, Jenny Lind!" The second was surmounted by the American eagle, and bore the inscription, "Welcome to America!" These decorations were not produced by magic, and I do not know that I can reasonably find fault with those who suspected I had a hand in their erection. My private carriage was in waiting, and Jenny Lind was escorted to it by Captain West. The rest of the musical party entered the carriage, and, mounting the box at the driver's side, I directed him to the Irving House. I took that seat as a legitimate advertisement, and my presence on the outside of the carriage aided those who filled the windows and sidewalks along the whole route, in coming to the conclusion that Jenny Lind had arrived.

A reference to the journals of that day will show that never before had there been such enthusiasm in the city of New York, or indeed in America. Within ten minutes after our arrival at the Irving House, not less than twenty thousand persons had congregated around the entrance in Broadway, nor was the number diminished before nine o'clock in the evening. At her request, I dined with her that afternoon, and when, according to European custom, she prepared to pledge me in a glass of wine, she was somewhat surprised at my saying, "Miss Lind, I do not think you can ask any other favour on earth which I would not gladly grant; but I am a teetotalter, and must beg to be permitted to drink your health and happiness in a glass of cold water."

At twelve o'clock that night, she was serenaded by the New York Musical Fund society, numbering, on that occasion, two hundred musicians. They were escorted to the Irving House by about three hundred firemen, in their red shirts, bearing torches. There was a far greater throng in the streets than there was even during the day. Calls for Jenny Lind were so vehement that I led her through a window to the balcony. The cheers from the crowds lasted





WELCOME TO JENNY LIND.



for several minutes, before the serenade was permitted to proceed.

I have given the merest sketch of but a portion of the incidents of Jenny Lind's first day in America. For weeks afterwards the excitement was unabated. Her rooms were thronged by visitors, including the magnates of the land in both Church and State. The carriages of the wealthiest citizens could be seen in front of her hotel, at nearly all hours of the day, and it was with some difficulty that I prevented the "fashionables" from monopolising her altogether, and thus, as I believed, sadly marring my interests by cutting her off from the warm sympathies she had awakened among the masses. Presents of all sorts were showered upon her. Milliners, mantua-makers, and shopkeepers vied with each other in calling her attention to their wares, of which they sent her many valuable specimens, delighted if, in return, they could receive her autograph acknowledgment. Songs, quadrilles, and polkas were dedicated to her, and poets sung in her praise. We had Jenny Lind gloves, Jenny Lind bonnets, Jenny Lind riding-hats, shawls, mantillas, robes, chairs, sofas, piano—in fact, everything was Jenny Lind. Her movements were constantly watched, and the moment her carriage appeared at the door, it was surrounded by multitudes, eager to catch a glimpse of the Swedish Nightingale.

Before her arrival I had offered 200 dollars for a prize ode, "Greeting to America," to be sung by Jenny Lind at her first concert. Several hundred "poems" were sent in from all parts of the United States and the Canadas. The duties of the Prize Committee, in reading these effusions and making choice of the one most worthy the prize, were truly arduous. The "offerings," with perhaps a dozen exceptions, were the merest doggerel trash. The prize was awarded to Bayard Taylor for the following ode:—

#### REETING TO AMERICA.

WORDS BY BAYARD TAYLOR—MUSIC BY JULIUS BENEDICT.

I greet with a full heart the Land of the West,  
Whose Banner of Stars o'er a world is unrolled;  
Whose empire o'er shadows Atlantic's wide breast,  
And opens to sunset its gateway of gold!



The land of the mountain, the land of the lake,  
And rivers that roll in magnificent tide—  
Where the souls of the mighty from slumber awake,  
And hallow the soil for whose freedom they died !

Thou Cradle of empire ! though wide be the foam  
That severs the land of my fathers and thee,  
I hear, from thy bosom, the welcome of home,  
For song has a home in the hearts of the Free !  
And long as thy waters shall gleam in the sun  
And long as thy heroes remember their scars,  
Be the hands of thy children united as one,  
And Peace shed her light on thy Banner of Stars !

Jenny Lind's first concert was fixed to come off at Castle Garden, on Wednesday evening, September 11th, and most of the tickets were sold at auction on the Saturday and Monday previous to the concert. John N. Genin, the hatter, laid the foundation of his fortune by purchasing the first ticket at 225 dollars.

The proprietors of the Garden saw fit to make the usual charge of one shilling to all persons who entered the premises, yet three thousand people were present at the auction. One thousand tickets were sold on the first day for an aggregate sum of \$10,141.

On the Tuesday after her arrival, I informed Miss Lind that I wished to make a slight alteration in our agreement. "What is it ?" she asked in surprise.

"I am convinced," I replied, "that our enterprise will be much more successful than either of us anticipated. I wish, therefore, to stipulate that you shall receive not only 1,000 dollars for each concert, besides all the expenses, as heretofore agreed on, but after taking 5,500 dollars per night for expenses and my services, the balance shall be equally divided between us."

Jenny looked at me with astonishment. She could not comprehend my proposition. After I had repeated it, and she fully understood its import, she cordially grasped me by the hand, and exclaimed : "Mr. Barnum, you are a gentleman of honour ; you are generous ; it is just as Mr. Bates told me ; I will sing for you as long as you please ; I will sing for you in America—in Europe—anywhere !"

On Tuesday, September 10th, I informed Miss Lind that,



judging by present appearances, her portion of the proceeds of the first concert would amount to \$10,000. She immediately resolved to devote every dollar of it to charity; and, sending for Mayor Woodhull, she acted under his and my advice in selecting the various institutions among which she wished the amount to be distributed.

The reception of Jenny Lind on her first appearance, in point of enthusiasm, was probably never before equalled. As Mr. Benedict led her towards the footlights, the entire audience rose to their feet, and welcomed her with three cheers, accompanied by the waving of thousands of hats and handkerchiefs. This was by far the largest audience to which Jenny Lind had ever sung. She was evidently much agitated, but the orchestra commenced, and before she had sung a dozen notes of "Casta Diva" she began to recover her self-possession, and long before the *scena* was concluded, she was as calm as if she was in her own drawing-room. Towards the last portion of the *cavatina*, the audience were so completely carried away by their feelings, that the remainder of the air was drowned in a perfect tempest of acclamation. Enthusiasm had been wrought to its highest pitch, but the musical powers of Jenny Lind exceeded all the brilliant anticipations which had been formed, and her triumph was complete. At the conclusion of the concert Jenny Lind was loudly called for, and was obliged to appear three times before the audience could be satisfied. Then they called vociferously for "Barnum," and I reluctantly responded to their demand.

On this first night, Mr. (now Sir) Julius Benedict firmly established with the American people his European reputation, as a most accomplished conductor and musical composer; while Signor Belletti inspired an admiration which grew warmer and deeper in the minds of the public, to the end of his career in this country.

The Rubicon was passed. The successful issue of the Jenny Lind enterprise was established. The amount of money received for tickets to the first concert was \$17,864.05.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT.

THE first great assembly at Castle Garden was not gathered by Jenny Lind's musical genius and powers alone. She was effectually introduced to the public before they had seen or heard her. She appeared in the presence of a jury already excited to enthusiasm in her behalf. She more than met their expectations, and all the means I had adopted to prepare the way were thus abundantly justified.

As a manager, I worked by setting others to work. Biographies of the Swedish Nightingale were largely circulated; "Foreign Correspondence" glorified her talents and triumphs by narratives of her benevolence; and "printer's ink" was invoked in every possible form to put and keep Jenny Lind before the people. I am happy to say that the press generally echoed the voice of her praise from first to last.

After the first month the business became thoroughly systematised, and by the help of faithful agents my personal labours were materially relieved; but from the first concert on the 11th September, 1850, until the ninety-third concert on the 9th June, 1851, a space of nine months, I did not know a waking moment that was entirely free from anxiety.

The night after Jenny's arrival in Boston, a display of fireworks was given in her honour, in front of the Revere House, after which followed a beautiful torchlight procession by the Germans of that city.

On her return from Boston to New York, Jenny, her companion, and Messrs. Benedict and Belletti, stopped at Iranistan, my residence in Bridgeport, where they remained until the following day. The morning after her arrival, she took my arm and proposed a promenade through the grounds. She seemed much pleased, and said, "I am astonished that you should have left such a beautiful place for the sake of travelling through the country with me."



The same day she told me in a playful mood, that she had heard a most extraordinary report.

"I have heard that you and I are about to be married," said she; "now how could such an absurd report ever have originated?"

"Probably from the fact that we are 'engaged,' " I replied. She enjoyed a joke, and laughed heartily.

"Do you know, Mr. Barnum," said she, "that if you had not built Iranistan, I should never have come to America for you?"

I expressed my surprise, and asked her to explain.

"I had received several applications to visit the United States," she continued, "but I did not much like the appearance of the applicants, nor did I relish the idea of crossing 3,000 miles of ocean; so I declined them all. But the first letter which Mr. Wilton, your agent, addressed me, was written upon a sheet headed with a beautiful engraving of Iranistan. It attracted my attention. I said to myself, a gentleman who has been so successful in his business as to be able to build and reside in such a palace cannot be a mere 'adventurer.' So I wrote to your agent, and consented to an interview, which I should have declined if I had not seen the picture of Iranistan."

"That, then, fully pays me for building it," I replied.

Jenny Lind always desired to reach a place in which she was to sing without having the time of her arrival known, thus avoiding the excitement of promiscuous crowds. As a manager, however, I knew that the interests of the enterprise depended in a great degree upon these excitements.

On reaching Philadelphia, a large concourse of persons awaited the approach of the steamer which conveyed her. With difficulty we pressed through the crowd, and were followed by many thousands to Jones's hotel. The street in front of the building was densely packed by the populace, and poor Jenny, who was suffering from a severe headache, retired to her apartments. I tried to induce the crowd to disperse, but they declared they would not do so until Jenny Lind should appear on the balcony. I would not disturb her, and, knowing that the tumult might prove an annoyance to her, I placed her bonnet and shawl upon her companion,



Miss Ahmansen, and led her out on the balcony. She bowed gracefully to the multitude, who gave her three hearty cheers and quietly dispersed. Miss Lind was so utterly averse to anything like deception, that we never ventured to tell her the part which her bonnet and shawl had played in the absence of their owner.

Jenny was in the habit of attending church whenever she could do so without attracting notice. She always preserved her nationality, also, by inquiring out and attending Swedish churches wherever they could be found. She gave 1,000 dollars to a Swedish church in Chicago.

My eldest daughter, Caroline, and her friend, Mrs. Lyman, of Bridgeport, accompanied me on the tour from New York to Havana, and thence home, *via* New Orleans and the Mississippi.

We were at Baltimore on the Sabbath, and my daughter, accompanying a friend, who resided in the city, to church, took a seat with her in the choir, and joined in the singing. A number of the congregation, who had seen Caroline with me the day previous, and supposed her to be Jenny Lind, were yet labouring under the same mistake, and it was soon whispered through the church that Jenny Lind was in the choir! The excitement was worked to its highest pitch when my daughter rose as one of the musical group. Every ear was on the alert to catch the first notes of her voice, and when she sang, glances of satisfaction passed through the assembly. Caroline, quite unconscious of the attention she attracted, continued to sing to the end of the hymn. Not a note was lost upon the ears of the attentive congregation. "What an exquisite singer!" "Heavenly sounds!" "I never heard the like!" and similar expressions were whispered through the church.

At the conclusion of the services, my daughter and her friend found the passage-way to their carriage blocked by a crowd who were anxious to obtain a nearer view of the "Swedish Nightingale." The pith of the joke is that we have never discovered that my daughter has any extraordinary claims as a vocalist.

Our orchestra in New York consisted of sixty. When we



started on our southern tour, we took with us permanently of the orchestra, twelve of the best musicians we could select, and in New Orleans augmented the force to sixteen. We increased the number to thirty-five, or forty or fifty, as the case might be, by the choice of musicians residing where the concerts were given. On our return to New York from Havana, we enlarged the orchestra to one hundred performers.

The morning after our arrival in Washington, President Fillmore called, and left his card, Jenny being out. When she returned and found the token of his attention, she was in something of a flurry. "Come," said she, "we must call upon the President immediately."

"Why so?" I inquired.

"Because he has called on me, and of course that is equivalent to a command for me to go to his house."

I assured her that she might make her mind at ease, for whatever might be the custom with crowned heads, our Presidents were not wont to "command" the movements of strangers, and she would be quite in time if she returned his call the next day. She was accompanied to the "White House" by Messrs. Benedict, Belletti, and myself, and several happy hours were spent in the private circle of the President's family.

Both concerts in Washington were attended by the President and his family, and every member of the cabinet. I noticed, also, among the audience, Henry Clay, Benton, Foote, Cass, and General Scott, and nearly every member of Congress. On the following morning, Miss Lind was called upon by Mr. Webster, Mr. Clay, General Cass, and Colonel Benton, and all parties were evidently gratified. I had introduced Mr. Webster to her in Boston. Upon hearing one of her wild mountain songs in New York, and also in Washington, Mr. Webster signified his approval by rising, drawing himself up to his full height, and making a profound bow. Jenny was delighted by this expression of praise from the great statesman. When I first introduced Miss Lind to Mr. Webster, at the Revere House, in Boston, she was greatly impressed with his manners and conversation, and after his



departure, walked up and down the room in great excitement, exclaiming: "Ah! Mr. Barnum, that is a man; I have never before seen such a man!"

We visited the Capitol while both Houses were in session.

During the week I was invited with Miss Lind and her immediate friends to visit Mount Vernon, with Colonel Washington, the then proprietor, and Mr. Scaton, ex-Mayor of Washington, and editor of the *Intelligencer*. Colonel Washington chartered a steamboat for the purpose. We were landed a short distance from the tomb, which we first visited. Proceeding to the house, we were introduced to Mrs. Washington, and several other ladies. Much interest was manifested by Miss Lind in examining the mementoes of the great man whose home it had been. A beautiful collation was spread out and arranged in fine taste. Before leaving, Mrs. Washington presented Jenny with a book from the library, with the name of Washington written by his own hand. She was much overcome at receiving this present, called me aside, and expressed her desire to give something in return. "I have nothing with me," she said, "excepting this watch and chain, and I will give that if you think it will be acceptable." I knew the watch was very valuable, and told her that so costly a present would not be expected, nor would it be proper. "The expense is nothing, compared to the value of that book," she replied, with deep emotion; "but as the watch was a present from a near friend, perhaps I should not give it away." Jenny Lind, I am sure, never forgot the pleasurable emotions of that day.

The voyage from Wilmington to Charleston was an exceedingly rough and perilous one. We were about thirty-six hours in making the passage, the usual time being seventeen. We arrived safely at last, and I was grieved to learn that for twelve hours the loss of the steamer had been considered certain, and had even been announced by telegraph in the Northern cities.

We remained at Charleston about ten days, to take the steamer "Isabella" on her regular trip to Havana. Jenny had been through so many excitements at the North, that she determined to have quiet here, and therefore declined



receiving any calls. One young lady, the daughter of a wealthy planter near Augusta, was so determined upon seeing her in private, that she paid one of the servants to allow her to put on a cap and white apron, and carry in the tray for Jenny's tea. I afterwards told Miss Lind of the joke, and suggested that after such an evidence of admiration, she should receive a call from the young lady.

"It is not admiration—it is only curiosity," replied Jenny "and I will not encourage such folly."

Christmas was at hand, and Jenny Lind determined to honour it in the way she had often done in Sweden. She had a beautiful Christmas tree privately prepared, and from its boughs depended a variety of presents for members of the company. These gifts were encased in paper, with the names of the recipients written on each.

After spending a pleasant evening in her drawing-room, she invited us into the parlour, where the "surprise" awaited us. Each person commenced opening the packages bearing his or her address, and although every individual had one or more pretty presents, she had prepared a joke for each. Mr. Benedict, for instance, took off wrapper after wrapper from one of the packages, which at first was as large as his head, but after having removed some forty coverings of paper, it was reduced to a size smaller than his hand, and the removal of the last envelope exposed to view a piece of cavendish tobacco. One of my presents, choicely wrapped in a dozen coverings, was a jolly young Bacchus in Parian marble, intended as a pleasant hit at my temperance principles!

The night before New Year's Day was spent in her apartments with great hilarity. Enlivened by music, singing, dancing, and story-telling, the hours glided swiftly away. Miss Lind asked me if I would dance with her. I told her my education had been neglected in that line, and that I had never danced in my life. "That is all the better," said she: "now dance with me in a cotillion. I am sure you can do it." She was a beautiful dancer, and I never saw her laugh more heartily than she did at my awkwardness. She said she would give me credit of being the poorest dancer she ever saw!

I had arranged with a man in New York to transport furni-



ture to Havana, provide a house, and board Jenny Lind and our immediate party during our stay. When we arrived, we found the building converted into a semi-hotel, and the apartments were anything but comfortable. Jenny was vexed. Soon after dinner she took a volante and an interpreter, and drove into the suburbs. She was absent four hours. Whither or why she had gone none of us knew. At length she returned, and informed us that she had hired a commodious furnished house in a delightful location outside the walls of the city, and invited us all to go and live with her during our stay in Havana, and we accepted the invitation. She was now freed from all annoyances; her time was her own, she received no calls, went and came when she pleased, had no meddlesome advisers about her, legal or otherwise, and was as merry as a cricket. We had a large court-yard in the rear of the house, and here she would come and romp and run, sing and laugh, like a young school-girl. "Now, Mr. Barnum, for another game of ball," she would say half a dozen times a day; whereupon, she would take an india-rubber ball (of which she had two or three), and commence a game of throwing and catching, which would be kept up until, being completely tired out, I would say, "I give it up." Then her rich, musical laugh would be heard ringing through the house as she exclaimed: "Oh, Mr. Barnum, you are too fat and too lazy; you cannot stand it to play ball with me!"

Her celebrated countrywoman, Miss Frederica Bremer, spent a few days with us very pleasantly, and it is difficult to conceive of a more delightful month than was passed by the entire party at Jenny Lind's house in the outskirts of Havana.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## INCIDENTS OF THE TOUR.

Soon after arriving in Havana, I discovered that a strong prejudice existed against our musical enterprise. I might rather say that the Habaneros, not accustomed to the high figure which tickets had commanded in the States, were determined on forcing me to adopt their opera prices; whereas I paid one thousand dollars per night for the Tacon Opera House, and other expenses being in proportion, I was determined to receive remunerating prices or give no concerts. They attended the concert, but were determined to show the great songstress no favour. I perfectly understood this feeling in advance, but studiously kept all knowledge of it from Miss Lind. I went to the first concert, therefore, with some misgivings in regard to her reception. The following, which I copy from the Havana correspondence of the *New York Tribune*, gives a correct account of it:

\* \* \* \* \*

"Jenny Lind soon appeared, led on by Signor Belletti. Some three or four hundred persons clapped their hands at her appearance, but this token of approbation was instantly silenced by at least two thousand five hundred decided hisses. Thus having settled the matter that there should be no forestalling of public opinion, and that if applause was given to Jenny Lind in that house it should first be incontestably earned, the most solemn silence prevailed. I have heard the Swedish Nightingale often in Europe as well as in America, and have ever noticed a distinct tremulousness attending her first appearance in any city. Indeed this feeling was plainly manifested in her countenance as she neared the foot-lights; but when she witnessed the kind of reception in store for her—so different from anything she had reason to expect—her countenance changed in an instant to a haughty self-possession, her eyes flashed defiance, and, becoming immovable as a statue, she stood there perfectly calm and beautiful. She was satisfied that she now had an ordeal to pass and a victory to gain worthy of her powers. In a moment her eye scanned the immense audience, the music began and then followed—how can I describe it?—such heavenly strains as I verily believe mortal never breathed except Jenny Lind, and mortal never heard



except from her lips. Some of the oldest Castilians kept a frown upon their brow and a curling sneer upon their lips; their ladies, however, and most of the audience began to look surprised. The gushing melody flowed on, increasing in beauty and glory. The *caballeros*, the *senoras* and *senoritas* began to look at each other; nearly all, however, kept their teeth clenched and their lips closed, evidently determined to resist to the last. The torrent flowed deeper and faster, the lark flew higher and higher, the melody grew richer and grander; still every lip was compressed. By and by, as the rich notes came dashing in rivers upon our enraptured ears, one poor critic involuntarily whispered a 'brava.' This out-bursting of the soul was instantly hissed down. The stream of harmony rolled on till, at the close, it made a clean sweep of every obstacle, and carried all before it. Not a vestige of opposition remained, but such a tremendous shout of applause as went up I never before heard,

"The triumph was most complete. And how was Jenny Lind affected? She who stood a few moment previous like adamant, now trembled like a reed in the wind, before the storm of enthusiasm which her own simple notes had produced. Tremblingly, slowly, and almost bowing her face to the ground, she withdrew. The roar and applause of victory increased. '*Encore! encore! encore!*' came from every lip. She again appeared, and courtesying low, again withdrew; but again, again and again did they call her out and at every appearance the thunders of applause rang louder and louder. Thus five times was Jenny Lind called out to receive their unanimous and deafening plaudits."

I cannot express what my feelings were as I watched this scene from the dress circle. Poor Jenny! I deeply sympathised with her when I heard that first hiss. I indeed observed the resolute bearing which she assumed, but was apprehensive of the result. When I witnessed her triumph, I could not restrain the tears of joy that rolled down my cheeks; and rushing through a private box, I reached the stage just as she was withdrawing after the fifth *encore*. "God bless you, Jenny! you have settled them!" I exclaimed.

"Are you satisfied?" said she, throwing her arms around my neck. She, too, was crying with joy, and never before did she look so beautiful in my eyes as on that evening.

I found my little Italian plate-dancer, Vivalla, in Havana. He called on me frequently. He was in great distress, having lost the use of his limbs on the left side of his body by paralysis. He was thus unable to earn a livelihood, although he still kept a performing dog, which turned a spinning-wheel and performed some curious tricks. One day, as I was pass-



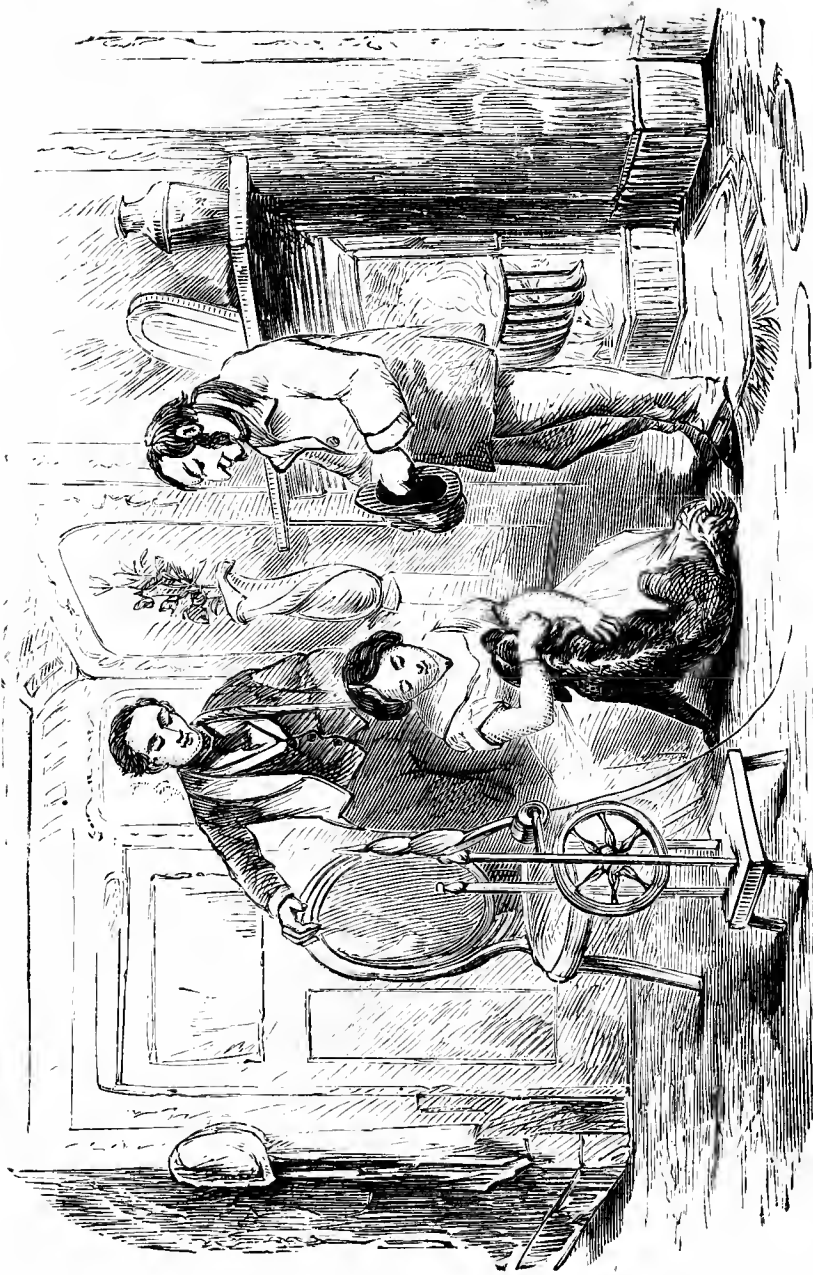
ing him out of the front gate, Miss Lind inquired who he was. I briefly recounted to her his history. She expressed deep interest in his case, and said something should be set apart for him in the benefit which she was about to give for charity. Accordingly, when the benefit came off, Miss Lind appropriated \$500 to him, and I made the necessary arrangements for his return to his friends in Italy. At the same benefit \$4,000 were distributed between two hospitals and a convent.

A few mornings after the benefit our bell was rung, and the servant announced that I was wanted. I went to the door and found a large procession of children, neatly dressed and bearing banners, attended by ten or twelve priests, arrayed in their rich and flowing robes. I inquired their business, and was informed that they had come to see Miss Lind, to thank her in person for her benevolence. I took their message, and informed Miss Lind that the leading priests of the convent had come in great state to see and thank her. "I will not see them," she replied; "they have nothing to thank me for. If I have done good, it is no more than my duty, and it is my pleasure. I do not deserve their thanks, and I will not see them." I returned her answer, and the leaders of the grand procession went away in disappointment.

The same day Vivalla called, and brought her a basket of the most luscious fruit that he could procure. The little fellow was very happy and extremely grateful. Miss Lind had gone out for a ride.

"God bless her! I am so happy; she is such a good lady. I shall see my brothers and sisters again. Oh, she is a very good lady," said poor Vivalla, overcome by his feelings. He begged me to thank her for him, and give her the fruit. As he was passing out of the door, he hesitated a moment, and then said: "Mr. Barnum I should like so much to have the good lady see my dog turn a wheel; it is very nice; he can spin very good. Shall I bring the dog and wheel for her? She is such a good lady, I wish to please her very much." I smiled, and told him she would not care for the dog; that he was quite welcome to the money, and that she refused to see the priests from the convent that morning, because she never received thanks for favours.





THE ITALIAN AND HIS DOG.



When Jenny came in I gave her the fruit, and laughingly told her that Vivalla wished to show her how his performing dog could turn a spinning-wheel.

"Poor man, poor man! do let him come; it is all the good creature can do for me," exclaimed Jenny, and the tears flowed thick and fast down her cheeks. "I like that, I like that," she continued, "do let the poor creature come and bring his dog. It will make him so happy."

I confess it made me happy, and I exclaimed, for my heart was full, "God bless you, it will make him cry for joy; he shall come to-morrow."

I saw Vivalla the same evening, and delighted him with the intelligence that Jenny would see his dog perform the next day, at four o'clock precisely.

"I will be punctual," said Vivalla, in a voice trembling with emotion; "but I was *sure* she would like to see my dog perform."

For full half an hour before the time appointed did Jenny Lind sit in her window on the second floor and watch for Vivalla and his dog. A few minutes before the appointed hour, she saw him coming. "Ah, here he comes! here he comes!" she exclaimed in delight, as she ran down stairs and opened the door to admit him. A negro-boy was bringing the small spinning-wheel, while Vivalla led the dog. Handing the boy a silver coin, she motioned him away, and taking the wheel in her arms, she said: "This is very kind of you to come with your dog. Follow me. I will carry the wheel up stairs." Her servant offered to take the wheel, but no, she would let no one carry it but herself. She called us all up to her parlour, and for one full hour did she devote herself to the happy Italian. She went down on her knees to pet the dog and to ask Vivalla all sorts of questions about his performances, his former course of life, his friends in Italy, and his present hopes and determinations. Then she sang and played for him, gave him some refreshments, finally insisted on carrying his wheel to the door, and her servant accompanied Vivalla to his boarding-house.

Poor Vivalla! He was probably never so happy before, but his enjoyment did not exceed that of Miss Lind. That scene



alone would have paid me for all my labours during the entire musical campaign. A few months later, however, the Havana correspondent of the *New York Herald* announced the death of Vivalla, and stated that the poor Italian's last words were about Jenny Lind and Mr. Barnum.

In New Orleans the wharf was crowded by a great concourse of persons, as the steamer *Falcon* approached. Jenny Lind had enjoyed a month of quiet, and dreaded the excitement which she must now again encounter.

"Mr. Barnum, I am sure I can never get through that crowd," said she, in despair.

"Leave that to me. Remain quiet for ten minutes, and there shall be no crowd here," I replied.

Taking my daughter on my arm, she threw her veil over her face, and we descended the gangway to the dock. The crowd pressed around. I had beckoned for a carriage before leaving the ship.

"That's Barnum, I know him," called out several persons at the top of their voices.

"Open the way, if you please, for Mr. Barnum and Miss Lind!" cried Le Grand Smith over the railing of the ship, the deck of which he had just reached from the wharf.

"Don't crowd her, if you please, gentlemen," I exclaimed, and by dint of pushing, squeezing and coaxing, we reached the carriage, and drove for the Montalba buildings, where Miss Lind's apartments had been prepared, and the whole crowd came following at our heels. In a few minutes afterwards, Jenny and her companions came quietly in a carriage, and were in the house before the ruse was discovered.

A funny incident occurred at New Orleans. Our concerts were given in the St. Charles Theatre, then managed by my good friend, the late Sol. Smith. In the open lots near the theatre were exhibitions of mammoth hogs, five footed horses, grizzly bears, and other animals.

A gentleman had a son about twelve years old, who had a wonderful ear for music. He could whistle or sing any tune after hearing it once. His father did not know nor care for a single note, but so anxious was he to please his son, that he paid thirty dollars for two tickets to the concert.



"I liked the music better than I expected," said he to me the next day, "but my son was in raptures. He was so perfectly enchanted that he scarcely spoke the whole evening, and I would on no account disturb his delightful reveries. When the concert was finished we came out of the theatre. Not a word was spoken. I knew that my musical prodigy was happy among the clouds, and I said nothing. I could not help envying him his love of music, and considered my thirty dollars as nothing, compared to the bliss it secured to him. Indeed, I was seriously thinking of taking him to the next concert, when he spoke. We were just passing the numerous shows upon the vacant lots. One of the signs attracted him, and he said, 'Father, let us go in and see the big hog!' The little scamp! I could have horse-whipped him!" said the father, who, loving a joke, could not help laughing at the ludicrous incident.

Some months afterwards, I was relating this story at my own table to several guests, among whom was a very matter-of-fact man who had not the faintest conception of humour. After the whole party had laughed heartily at the anecdote, my matter-of-fact friend gravely asked :

"And was it a very large hog, Mr. Barnum?"

I made arrangements with the captain of the splendid steamer *Magnolia*, of Louisville, to take our party as far as Cairo, the junction of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, stipulating for sufficient delay in Natchez, Mississippi, and in Memphis, Tennessee, to give a concert in each place. It was no unusual thing for me to charter a steamboat or a special train of cars for our party. With such an enterprisc as that, time and comfort were paramount to money.

The time on board the steamer was whiled away in reading, viewing the scenery of the Mississippi, and other diversions. One day we had a pleasant musical festival in the ladies' saloon for the gratification of the passengers, at which Jenny volunteered to sing without ceremony. It seemed to us she never sang so sweetly before. I also did my best to amuse my fellow passengers with anecdotes and the exhibition of sundry legerdemain tricks which I had been obliged to learn and use in the South years before, and under far different circumstances than those which attended the performance



now. Among other tricks, I caused a quarter of a dollar to disappear so mysteriously from beneath a card, that the mulatto barber on board came to the conclusion that I was in league with the devil.

The next morning I seated myself for the operation of shaving, and the coloured gentleman ventured to dip into the mystery. "Beg pardon, Mr. Barnum, but I have heard a great deal about you, and I saw more than I wanted to see last night. Is it true that you have sold yourself to the devil, so that you can do what you've a mind to?"

"Oh, yes," was my reply, "that is the bargain between us."

"How long did you agree for?" was the question next in order.

"Only nine years," said I. "I have had three of them already. Before the other six are out, I shall find a way to nonplus the old gentleman, and I have told him so to his face."

At this avowal, a larger space of white than usual was seen in the darkey's eyes, and he inquired, "Is it by this bargain that you get so much money?"

"Certainly. No matter who has money, nor where he keeps it, in his box or till, or anywhere about him, I have only to speak the words and it comes."

The shaving was completed in silence, but thought had been busy in the barber's mind, and he embraced the speediest opportunity to transfer his bag of coin to the iron safe in charge of the clerk.

The movement did not escape me, and immediately a joke was afoot. I had barely time to make two or three details of arrangement with the clerk, and resume my seat in the cabin, ere the barber sought a second interview, bent on testing the alleged powers of Beelzebub's colleague.

"Beg pardon, Mr. Barnum, but where is my money? Can you get it?"

"I do not want your money," was the quiet answer. "It is safe."

"Yes, I know it is safe—ha! ha!—it is in the iron safe in the clerk's office—safe enough from you!"



"It is not in the iron safe!" said I. This was said so quietly, yet positively, that the coloured gentleman ran to the office, and inquired if all was safe. "All right," said the clerk. "Open and let me see," replied the barber. The safe was unlocked and lo! the money was gone!

In mystified terror the loser applied to me for relief. "You will find the bag in your drawer," said I, and there it was found!

His curiosity was still great. "Please do another trick," said he.

"Very well," I replied, "stand perfectly still."

He did so, and I commenced muttering some mysterious words, as if performing an incantation.

"What are you doing?" asked the barber.

"I am changing you into a black cat," I replied, "but don't be afraid, I will change you back again, if I don't forget the words to do it with."

This was too much for the terrified darkey; with an awful screech he rushed to the side of the boat resolved to drown rather than undergo such a transformation.

He was captured and brought back to me, when I dispelled his fright by explaining the way in which I had tricked him. Relieved and reassured, he clapped his hands and executed an impromptu jig, exclaiming, "Ha! ha! when I get back to New Orleans won't I come de Barnum ober dem niggers!"





## CHAPTER XIX.

## JENNY LIND.

ACCORDING to agreement, the *Magnolia* waited for us at Natchez and Memphis, and we gave profitable concerts at both places. The concert at Memphis was the sixtieth in the list since Miss Lind's arrival in America, and the first concert in St. Louis would be the sixty-first. When we reached that city on the morning of the day when our first concert was to be given, Miss Lind's secretary came to me, commissioned, he said, by her, and announced that as sixty concerts had already taken place, she proposed to avail herself of one of the conditions of our contract, and cancel the engagement next morning. As this was the first intimation of the kind I had received, I was somewhat startled, though I assumed an entirely placid demeanour, and asked :

"Does Miss Lind authorise you to give me this notice?"

"I so understand it," was the reply.

I immediately reflected that if our contract was thus suddenly cancelled, Miss Lind was bound to repay to me all I had paid her over the stipulated \$1,000 for each concert, and a little calculation showed that the sum thus to be paid back was \$77,000, since she had already received from me \$137,000 for sixty concerts. In this view, I could not but think that this was a ruse of some of her advisers, and possibly, that she might know nothing of the matter. So I told her secretary that I would see him again in an hour, and meanwhile I went to my old friend Mr. Sol. Smith for his legal and friendly advice.

I showed him my contract and told him how much I had been annoyed by the selfish and greedy hangers on and advisers, legal and otherwise, of Jenny Lind. I talked to him about the "wheels within wheels" which moved this great musical enterprise, and asked and gladly accepted his advice, which mainly coincided with my own views of the situation.



I then went back to the secretary and quietly told him that I was ready to settle with Miss Lind and to close the engagement.

"But," said he, manifestly "taken aback," "you have already advertised concerts in Louisville and Cincinnati, I believe."

"Yes," I replied; "but you may take my contracts for halls and printing off my hands at cost." I further said that he was welcome to the assistance of my agent who had made these arrangements, and, moreover, that I would cheerfully give my own services to help them through with these concerts, thus giving them a good start "on their own hook."

My liberality, which he acknowledged, emboldened him to make an extraordinary proposition:—

"Now suppose," he said, "Miss Lind should wish to give some fifty concerts in this country, what would you charge, as manager, per concert?"

"A million dollars each, not one cent less," I replied. I was now thoroughly aroused; the whole thing was as clear as daylight, and I continued:—

"Now we might as well understand each other; I don't believe Miss Lind has authorised you to propose to me to cancel our contract; but if she has, just bring me a line to that effect over her signature and her cheque for the amount due to me by the terms of that contract, some \$77,000, and we will close our business connections at once."

"But why not make a new arrangement," persisted the secretary, "for fifty concerts more, by which Miss Lind shall pay you liberally, say \$1,000 per concert?"

"Simply because I hired Miss Lind, and not she me," I replied, "and because I never ought to take a farthing less for my risk and trouble than the contract gives me. I have voluntarily paid Miss Lind more than twice as much as I originally contracted to pay her, or as she expected to receive when she first engaged with me. Now, if she is not satisfied, I wish to settle instantly and finally. If you do not bring me her decision to-day, I shall go to her for it to-morrow morning."

I met the secretary soon after breakfast next morning and



asked him if he had a written communication for me from Miss Lind? He said he had not, and that the whole thing was a "joke." He merely wanted, he added, to see what I would say to the proposition. I asked him if Miss Lind was in the "joke," as he called it? He hoped I would not inquire, but would let the matter drop. I went on, as usual, and gave four more concerts in St. Louis, and followed out my programme as arranged in other cities for many weeks following; nor at that time, nor at any time afterwards, did Miss Lind give me the slightest intimation that she had any knowledge of the proposition of her secretary to cancel our agreement, or to employ me as her manager.

During our stay at St. Louis, I delivered a temperance lecture in the theatre, and at the close, among other signers of the pledge, was my friend and adviser, Sol. Smith. "Uncle Sol." as every one called him, was a famous character in his time. He was an excellent comedian, an author, a manager and a lawyer. In 1854, he published an autobiographical work, preceded by a dedication which I venture to copy:

"TO PHINEAS T. BARNUM, PROPRIETOR OF THE  
AMERICAN MUSEUM, ETC.

"GREAT IMPRESSARIO: Whilst you were engaged in your grand Jenny Lind speculation, the following conundrum went the rounds of the American newspapers:

"'Why is it that Jenny Lind and Barnum will never fall out?' Answer: 'Because he is always for-getting, and she is always for-giving.'

"I have never asked you the question directly, whether you, Mr. Barnum, started that conundrum, or not; but I strongly suspect that you did. At all events, I noticed that your whole policy was concentrated into one idea—to make an angel of Jenny, and depreciate yourself in contrast.

"You may remember that in this city (St. Louis), I acted in one instance as your 'legal adviser,' and, as such necessarily became acquainted with all the particulars of your contract with the so-called Swedish Nightingale, as well as the various modifications claimed by that charitable lady, and submitted to by you after her arrival in this country; which modifications (I suppose it need no longer be a secret) secured to her—besides the original stipulation of one thousand dollars for every concert, attendants, carriages, assistant artists, and a pompous and extravagant retinue, fit (only) for a European princess—one half of the profits of each perform-



ance. You may also remember the legal advice I gave you on the occasion referred to, and the salutary effect of your following it. You must remember the extravagant joy you felt afterwards, in Philadelphia, when the 'Angel' made up her mind to avail herself of one of the stipulations in her contract, to break off at the end of a hundred nights, and even bought out seven of that hundred—supposing that she could go on without your aid as well as with it. And you cannot but remember, how, like a rocket-stick she dropped, when your business connection with her ended, and how she 'fizzed out' the remainder of her concert nights in this part of the world, and soon afterwards retired to her domestic blissitude in Sweden.

"You know, Mr. Barnum, if you would only tell, which of the two it was that was 'for-getting,' and which 'for-giving;' and you also know who actually gave the larger portion of those sums which you heralded to the world as the sole gifts of the divine 'Jenny.'

"Of all your speculations—from the negro centenarian, who didn't nurse General Washington, down to the Bearded Woman of Genoa—there was not one which required the exercise of so much humbuggery as the Jenny Lind concerts; and I verily believe there is no man living, other than yourself, who could, or would, have risked the enormous expenditure of money necessary to carry them through successfully—travelling, with sixty artists, four thousand miles, and giving ninety-three concerts, at an actual cost of forty-five hundred dollars each, is what no other man would have undertaken—you accomplished this, and pocketed by the operation but little less than two hundred thousand dollars! Mr. Barnum, you are yourself, alone!

"I honour you, oh! Great Impressario, as the most successful manager in America or any other country. Democrat, as you are, you can give a practical lesson to the aristocrats of Europe how to live. At your beautiful and tasteful residence, 'Iranistan' (I don't like the name, though), you can and do entertain your friends with a warmth of hospitality, only equalled by that of the great landed proprietors of the old country, or of our own 'sunny South.' Whilst riches are pouring into your coffers from your various 'ventures' in all parts of the world, you do not hoard your immense means, but continually 'cast them forth upon the waters,' rewarding labour, encouraging the arts, and lending a helping hand to industry in all its branches. Not content with doing all this, you deal telling blows, whenever opportunity offers, upon the monster Intemperance. Your labours in this great cause alone should entitle you to the thanks of all good men, women, and children in the land. Mr. Barnum, you deserve all your good fortune, and I hope you may long live to enjoy your wealth and honour.

"As a small instalment towards the debt, I, as one of the community, owe you, and with the hope of affording you an hour's amusement (if you can spare that amount of time from your numerous avocations to read it), I present you with this little volume, contain-



ing a very brief account of some of my 'journey-work' in the South and West ; and remain very respectfully,

" Your friend and affectionate uncle,

" SOL SMITH.

" Chouteau Avenue, St. Louis, Nov. 1, 1854."

Whenever Miss Lind sang for a public or private charity she gave her voice, which was worth a thousand dollars to her every evening. At such times, I always insisted upon paying for the hall, orchestra, printing, and other expenses, because I felt able and willing to contribute my full share towards the worthy objects which prompted these benefits.

We were in Havana when I showed to Miss Lind a paper containing the conundrum on "for-getting" and "for-giving," at which she laughed heartily, but immediately checked herself and said :

"Oh ! Mr. Barnum, this is not fair ; you know that you really give more than I do from the proceeds of every one of these charity concerts."

And it is but just to her to say that she frequently remonstrated with me, and declared that the actual expenses should be deducted, and the thus lessened sum devoted to the charity for which the concert might be given ; but I always laughingly told her that I must do my part, give my share, and that it was purely a business operation, "bread cast upon the waters," it would return, perhaps buttered ; for the larger her reputation for liberality, the more liberal the public would surely be to us and to our enterprise.





## CHAPTER XX.

## CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN.

AFTER five concerts in St. Louis, we went to Nashville, Tennessee, where we gave our sixty-sixth and sixty-seventh concerts in this country.

The first of April occurred while we were in Nashville. I was considerably annoyed during the forenoon by the calls of members of the company, who came to me under the belief that I had sent for them. After dinner I concluded to give them all a touch of "April Fool." The following article, which appeared the next morning in the Nashville *Daily American*, my amanuensis having imparted the secret to the editor, will show how it was done :

"A series of laughable jokes came off yesterday at the Veranda in honour of All Fools' Day. Mr. Barnum was at the bottom of the mischief. He managed in some mysterious manner, to obtain a number of blank telegraphic despatches and envelopes from one of the offices in this city, and then went to work and manufactured 'astounding intelligence' for most of the parties composing the Jenny Lind suite. Almost every person in the company received a telegraphic despatch, written under the direction of Barnum. Mr. Barnum's daughter was informed that her mother, her cousin, and several other relatives, were waiting for her in Louisville, and various other important and extraordinary items of domestic intelligence were communicated to her. Mr. Le Grand-Smith was told by a despatch from his father that his native village, in Connecticut, was in ashes, including his own homestead, &c. Several of Barnum's employés had most liberal offers of engagements from banks and other institutions at the North. Burke, and others of the musical professors, were offered princely salaries by opera managers, and many of them received most tempting inducements to proceed immediately to the World's Fair in London.



“ One married gentleman in Mr. Barnum's suite received the gratifying intelligence that he had for two days been the father of a pair of bouncing boys (mother and children doing well), an event which he had been anxiously looking for during the week, though on a somewhat more limited scale. In fact, nearly every person in the party engaged by Barnum received some extraordinary telegraphic intelligence, and, as the great Impresario managed to have the despatches delivered simultaneously, each recipient was for some time busily occupied with his own personal news.

“ By and by, each began to tell his neighbour his good or bad tidings; and each was, of course, rejoiced or grieved according to circumstances. Several gave Mr. Barnum notice of their intention to leave him, in consequence of better offers; and a number of them sent off telegraphic despatches and letters by mail, in answer to those received.

“ The man who had so suddenly become the father of twins, telegraphed to his wife to ‘ be of good cheer,’ and that he would ‘ start for home to-morrow.’ At a late hour last night the secret had not got out, and we presume that many of the victims will first learn from our columns that they have been taken in by Barnum and All Fools' Day!”

From Nashville, Jenny Lind and a few friends went by way of the Mammoth Cave to Louisville, while the rest of the party proceeded by steamboat.

While in Havana, I engaged Signor Salvi for a few months, to begin about the tenth of April. He joined us at Louisville, and sang in the three concerts there with great satisfaction to the public. Mr. George D. Prentice, of the *Louisville Journal*, and his beautiful and accomplished lady, who had contributed much to the pleasure of Miss Lind and our party, accompanied us to Cincinnati.

As the steamer from Louisville to Cincinnati would arrive at Madison about sundown, and would wait long enough for us to give a concert, we did so, and at ten o'clock we were again on board the fine steamer *Ben Franklin* bound for Cincinnati.

The next morning the crowd upon the wharf was immense. I was fearful that an attempt to repeat the New Orleans ruse



with my daughter would be of no avail, as the joke had been published in the Cincinnati papers. So I gave my arm to Miss Lind, and begged her to have no fears for I had hit upon an expedient which would save her from annoyance. We then descended the plank to the shore, and as soon as we had touched it, Le Grand Smith called out from the boat, as if he had been one of the passengers: "That's no go, Mr. Barnum; you can't pass your daughter off for Jenny Lind this time."

The remark elicited a peal of merriment from the crowd, several persons calling out, "That won't do, Barnum! You may fool the New Orleans folks, but you can't come it over the 'Buckeyes.' We intend to stay here until you bring out Jenny Lind!" They readily allowed me to pass with the lady whom they supposed to be my daughter, and in five minutes afterwards the Nightingale was complimenting Mr. Coleman upon the beautiful and commodious apartments which were devoted to her in the Burnett House.

In passing up the river to Pittsburg, the boat waited four hours to enable us to give a concert at Wheeling.

At Pittsburg we gave one concert.

We reached New York early in May, 1851, and gave fourteen concerts in Castle Garden and Metropolitan Hall. The last of these made the ninety-second regular concert under our engagement. Jenny Lind had now again reached the atmosphere of her legal and other "advisers," and I soon discovered the effects of their influence. I, however, cared little what course they advised her to pursue. I, indeed, wished they would prevail upon her to close with her hundredth concert, for I had become weary with constant excitement and unremitting exertions. I felt it would be well for her to try some concerts on her own account, if she saw fit to credit her advisers' assurance that I had not managed the enterprise as successfully as it might have been done.

At about the eighty-fifth concert, therefore, I was most happy to learn from her lips that she had concluded to pay the forfeiture of twenty-five thousand dollars, and terminate the concerts with the one hundredth.



We went to Philadelphia, where I had advertised the ninety-second, ninety-third, and ninety-fourth concerts. Not caring enough for the profits of the remaining seven concerts to continue the engagement at the risk of disturbing the friendly feelings which had hitherto uninterruptedly existed between that lady and myself, I wrote her a letter offering to relinquish the engagement, if she desired it, at the termination of the concert which was to take place that evening, upon her simply allowing me a thousand dollars per concert for the seven which would yet remain to make up the hundred, besides paying me the sum stipulated as a forfeiture for closing the engagement at the one hundredth concert. This offer she accepted, and our engagement terminated.

Jenny Lind gave several concerts, with varied success, and then retired to Niagara Falls, and afterwards to Northampton, Massachusetts. While sojourning at the latter place, she visited Boston, and was married to Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, a German composer and pianist, to whom she was much attached, and who had studied music with her in Germany. He played several times in our concerts. He was a very quiet, inoffensive gentleman, and an accomplished musician.

I met her several times after our engagement terminated. She was always affable. On one occasion, while passing through Bridgeport, she told me that she had been sadly harassed in giving her concerts. "People cheat me and swindle me very much," said she, "and I find it very annoying to give concerts on my own account."

I was always supplied with complimentary tickets when she gave concerts in New York, and on the occasion of her last appearance in America I visited her in her room back of the stage, and bade her and her husband adieu, with my best wishes.

After so many months of anxiety, labour and excitement, in the Jenny Lind enterprise, it will readily be believed that I desired tranquillity. I spent a week at Cape May, and then came home to Iranistan, where I remained during the entire summer.



JENNY LIND's net avails of 95 concerts ...	...	\$176,675.09
P. T. BARNUM's gross receipts, after paying Miss Lind...	... ..	535,486.25

Total Receipts of 95 Concerts ... .. \$712,161.34

PRICE OF TICKETS.—The highest price paid for tickets were at auction, as follows:—John N. Genin, in New York, \$225; Ossian E. Dodge, in Boston, \$625; Colonel Wm. C. Ross, in Providence, \$650; M. A. Root, in Philadelphia, \$625; Mr. D'Arcy, in New Orleans, \$240; a keeper of a refreshment saloon in St. Louis, \$150; a Daguerreotypist, in Baltimore, \$100. I cannot now recall the names of the last two. After the sale of the first ticket the premium usually fell to \$20, and so downward in the scale of figures. The fixed price of tickets ranged from \$7 to \$3. Promenade tickets were from \$2 to \$1 each.





## CHAPTER XXI.

## OTHER ENTERPRISES.

IN 1849 I had projected a great travelling museum and menagerie, and, in carrying out a portion of the plan, I chartered the ship *Regatta*, Captain Pratt, and despatched her, together with my agents, Messrs. June and Nutter, to Ceylon. The ship left New York in May, 1850, and was absent one year. Their mission was to procure, either by capture or purchase, twelve or more living elephants, besides such other wild animals as they could secure. In order to provide sufficient drink and provender for a cargo of these huge animals, I purchased a large quantity of hay in New York. Five hundred tons were left at the Island of St. Helena, to be taken on the return trip of the ship, and staves and hoops of water-casks were also left in the same place.

They arrived in New York in 1851, with ten elephants, and these harnessed in pairs to a chariot, paraded up Broadway, past the Irving House, while Jenny Lind was staying at that hotel, on the occasion of her second visit to New York. We added a caravan of wild animals and many museum curiosities, the entire outfit, including horses, vans, carriages, tent, &c., costing \$109,000, and commenced operations, with the presence, and under the "patronage" of General Tom Thumb, who travelled nearly four years as one of the attractions of "Barnum's Great Asiatic Caravan, Museum, and Menagerie," returning us immense profits.

At the end of that time, after exhibiting in all sections of the country, I sold out the entire establishment—animals, cages, chariots, and paraphernalia, excepting one elephant, which I retained in my own possession two months for agricultural purposes. It occurred to me that if I could put an elephant to ploughing for a while on my farm at Bridgeport, it would be a capital advertisement for the American



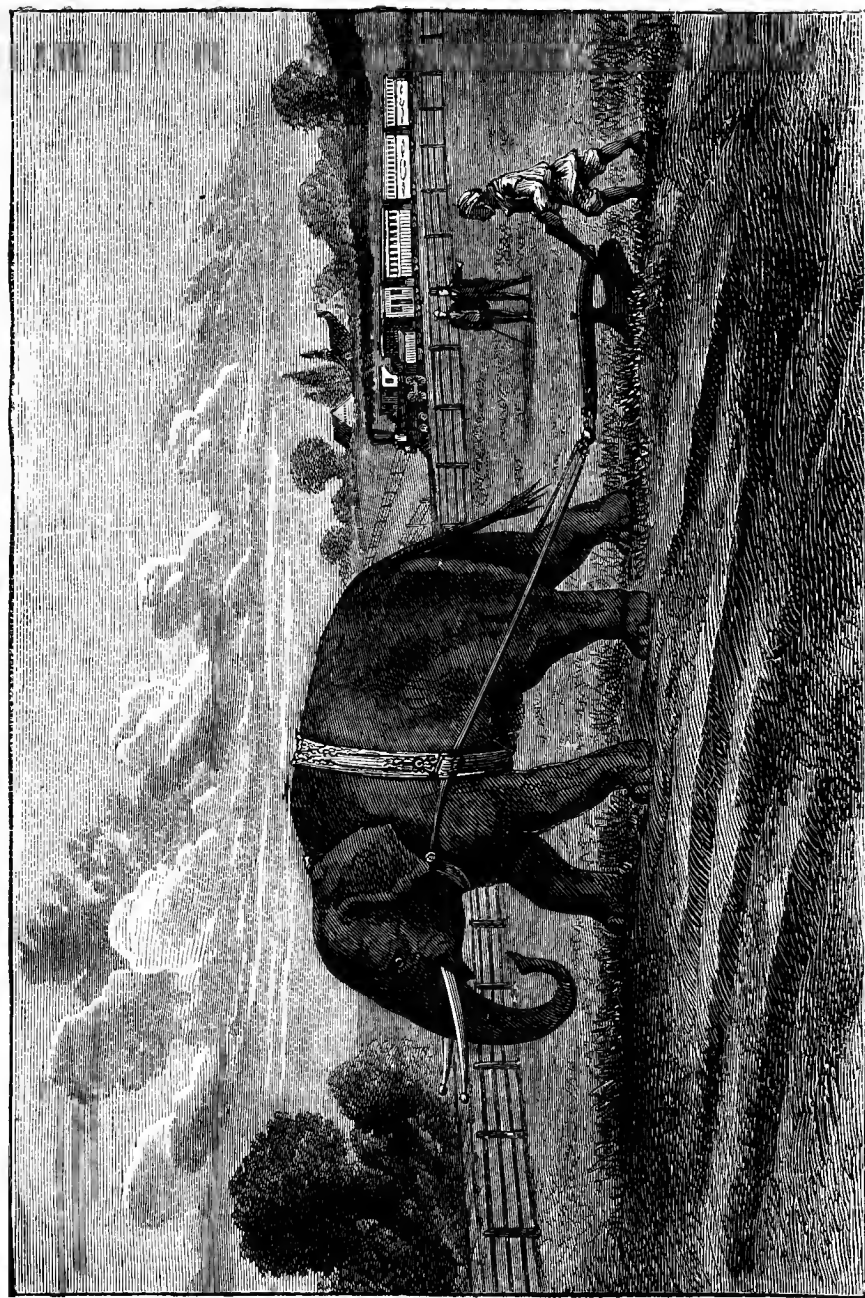
Museum, which was then, and always during my proprietorship of that establishment, foremost in my thoughts.

So I sent him to Connecticut in charge of his keeper, whom I dressed in Oriental costume, and keeper and elephant were stationed on a six-acre lot which lay close beside the track of the New York and New Haven railroad. The keeper was furnished with a time-table of the road, with special instructions to be busily engaged in his work whenever passenger trains from either end were passing through. Of course, the matter soon appeared in the papers, and went the entire rounds of the press in this country and even in Europe. Hundreds of people came many miles to witness the novel spectacle. Letters poured in upon me from the secretaries of hundreds of State and county agricultural societies throughout the Union, stating that the Presidents and Directors of such societies had requested them to propound to me a series of questions in regard to the new power I had put in operation on my farm. These questions were greatly diversified, but the "general" run of them was something like the following :

1. "Is the elephant a profitable agricultural animal?"
2. "How much can an elephant plough in a day?"
3. "How much can he draw?"
4. "How much does he eat?"—this question was invariably asked, and was a very important one.
5. "Will elephants make themselves generally useful on a farm?"
6. "What is the price of an elephant?"
7. "Where can elephants be purchased?"

Then would follow a score of other inquiries, such as, whether elephants were easily managed; if they would quarrel with cattle; if it was possible to breed them; how old elephants must be before they would earn their own living; and so on indefinitely. I began to be alarmed lest some one should buy an elephant, and so share the fate of the man who drew one in a lottery, and did not know what to do with him. I accordingly had a general letter printed, which I mailed to all my anxious inquirers. It was headed "strictly confidential," and I then stated, begging my corre-





ELEPHANTINE AGRICULTURE.



spondents "not to mention it," that to me the elephant was a valuable agricultural animal, because he was an excellent advertisement to my Museum; but that to other farmers he would prove very unprofitable for many reasons. In the first place such an animal would cost from \$3,000 to \$10,000; in cold weather he would not work at all; in any weather he could not earn even half his living; he would eat up the value of his own head, trunk, and body every year; and I begged my correspondents not to do so foolish a thing as to undertake elephant farming.

Newspaper reporters came from far and near, and wrote glowing accounts of the elephantine performances. Pictures of Barnum's ploughing elephant appeared in illustrated papers at home and abroad.

The six acres were ploughed over at least sixty times before I thought the advertisement sufficiently circulated, and I then sold the elephant to Van Amburgh's Menagerie.

In 1851 I became a part owner of the steamship *North America*. Our intention in buying it was to run it to Ireland as a passenger and freight ship. The project was, however, abandoned, and Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt bought one-half of the steamer, while the other half was owned by three persons, of whom I was one. The steamer was sent around Cape Horn to San Francisco, and was put into the Vanderbilt line.

After she had made several trips I called upon Mr. Vanderbilt, at his office, and introduced myself, as this was the first time we had met.

"Is it possible you are Barnum?" exclaimed the Commodore, in surprise; "why, I expected to see a monster, part lion, part elephant, and a mixture of rhinoceros and tiger! Is it possible," he continued, "that you are the showman who has made so much noise in the world?"

I laughingly replied that I was, and added that if I too had been governed in my anticipation of his personal appearance by the fame he had achieved in his line, I should have expected to have been saluted by a steam-whistle, and to have seen him dressed in a pea-jacket, blowing off steam, and crying out, "all abo~rd that's going."



"Instead of which," replied Mr. Vanderbilt, "I suppose you have come to ask me 'to walk up to the Captain's office and settle.'"

After this interchange of civilities, we talked about the success of the *North America* in having got safely around the Horn, and of the acceptable manner in which she was doing her duty on the Pacific side.

"We have received no statement of her earnings yet," said the Commodore, "but if you want money, give your receipt to our treasurer, and take some."

A few months subsequent to this, I sold out my share in the steamship to Mr. Daniel Drew.

Some references as to the various enterprises and "side shows" connected with and disconnected from my Museum, is necessary to show how industriously I have catered for the public's amusement, not only in America, but abroad. When I was in Paris in 1844, in addition to the purchase of Robert Houdin's ingenious automaton writer, and many other costly curiosities for the Museum, I ordered, at an expense of \$3,000, a panoramic diorama of the obsequies of Napoleon. Every event of that grand pageant, from the embarkation of the body at St. Helena, to its entombment at the Hotel des Invalides, amid the most gorgeous parade ever witnessed in France, was wonderfully depicted. This exhibition, after having had its day at the American Museum, was sold, and extensively and profitably exhibited elsewhere. While I was in London, during the same year, I engaged a company of "Campanologians, or Lancashire Bell Ringers," then performing in Ireland, to make an American tour. They were really admirable performers, and by means of their numerous bells, of various sizes, they produced the most delightful music. They attracted much attention in various parts of the United States, in Canada, and in Cuba.

As a compensation to England for the loss of the bell ringers, I despatched an agent to America for a party of Indians, including squaws. He proceeded to Iowa, and returned to London with a company of sixteen. They were exhibited by Mr. Catlin on our joint account, and were finally left in his sole charge.



On my first return to America from Europe, I engaged Mr. Faber, an elderly and ingenious German, who had constructed an automaton speaker. It was of life-size, and when worked with keys similar to those of a piano, it really articulated words and sentences with surprising distinctness. My agent exhibited it for several months in the Egyptian Hall, London, and also in the provinces. This was a marvellous piece of mechanism, though for some unaccountable reason it did not prove a success. The Duke of Wellington visited it several times, and at first he thought that the "voice" proceeded from the exhibitor, whom he assumed to be a skilful ventriloquist. He was asked to touch the keys with his own fingers, and, after some instruction in the method of operating, he was able to make the machine speak, not only in English, but also in German, with which language the Duke seemed familiar. Thereafter, he entered his name on the exhibitor's autograph book, and certified that the "Automaton Speaker" was an extraordinary production of mechanical genius.

The models of machinery exhibited in the Royal Polytechnic Institution in London, pleased me so well that I procured a duplicate; also duplicates of the "Dissolving Views," the Chromatope and Physioscope, including many American scenes painted expressly to my order, at an aggregate cost of \$7,000. After they had been exhibited in my Museum, they were sold to itinerant showmen, and some of them were afterwards on exhibition in various parts of the United States.

In June, 1850, I added the celebrated Chinese Collections to the attractions of the American Museum. I also engaged the Chinese family, consisting of two men, two "small-footed" women and two children.

In 1850, the celebrated Bateman children acted for several weeks at the American Museum, and in June of that year I sent them to London with their father and Mr. Le Grand Smith, where they played in the St. James's Theatre, and afterwards in the principal provincial theatres. The elder of these children, Miss Kate Bateman has, as most people are aware, since attained the highest histrionic distinction in America and England, and has reached the very head of her profession.



In October, 1852, having stipulated with Mr. George A. Wells and Mr. Bushnell that they should share in the enterprise and take the entire charge, I engaged Miss Catherine Hayes and Herr Begnis, to give a series of sixty concerts in California, and the engagement was fulfilled to our entire satisfaction. Mr. Bushnell afterwards went to Australia with Miss Hayes, and they were subsequently married. Both of them are dead.

Before setting out for California, Miss Catherine Hayes, her mother and sister, spent several days at Iranistan, and were present at the marriage of my eldest daughter, Caroline, to Mr. David W. Thompson. The wedding was to take place in the evening, and in the afternoon I was getting shaved in a barber-shop in Bridgeport, when Mr. Thompson drove up to the door in great haste and exclaimed :

“ Mr. Barnum, Iranistan is in flames ! ”

I ran out half-shaved, with the lather on my face, jumped into his waggon and bade him drive home with all speed. I was greatly alarmed, for the house was full of visitors who had come from a distance to attend the wedding, and all the costly presents, dresses, refreshments, and everything prepared for a marriage celebration to which nearly a thousand guests had been invited, were already in my house. Mr. Thompson told me that he had seen the flames bursting from the roof, and it seemed to me that there was but little hope of saving the building.

My mind was distressed, not so much at the great pecuniary loss which the destruction of Iranistan would involve, as at the possibility that some of my family or visitors would be killed or seriously injured in attempting to save something from the fire. Then I thought of the sore disappointment this calamity would cause to the young couple, as well as to those who were invited to the wedding. I saw that Mr. Thompson looked pale and anxious.

“ Never mind ! ” said I ; “ we can’t help these things ; the house will probably be burned ; but if no one is killed or injured, you shall be married to-night, if we are obliged to perform the ceremony in the coach-house.”

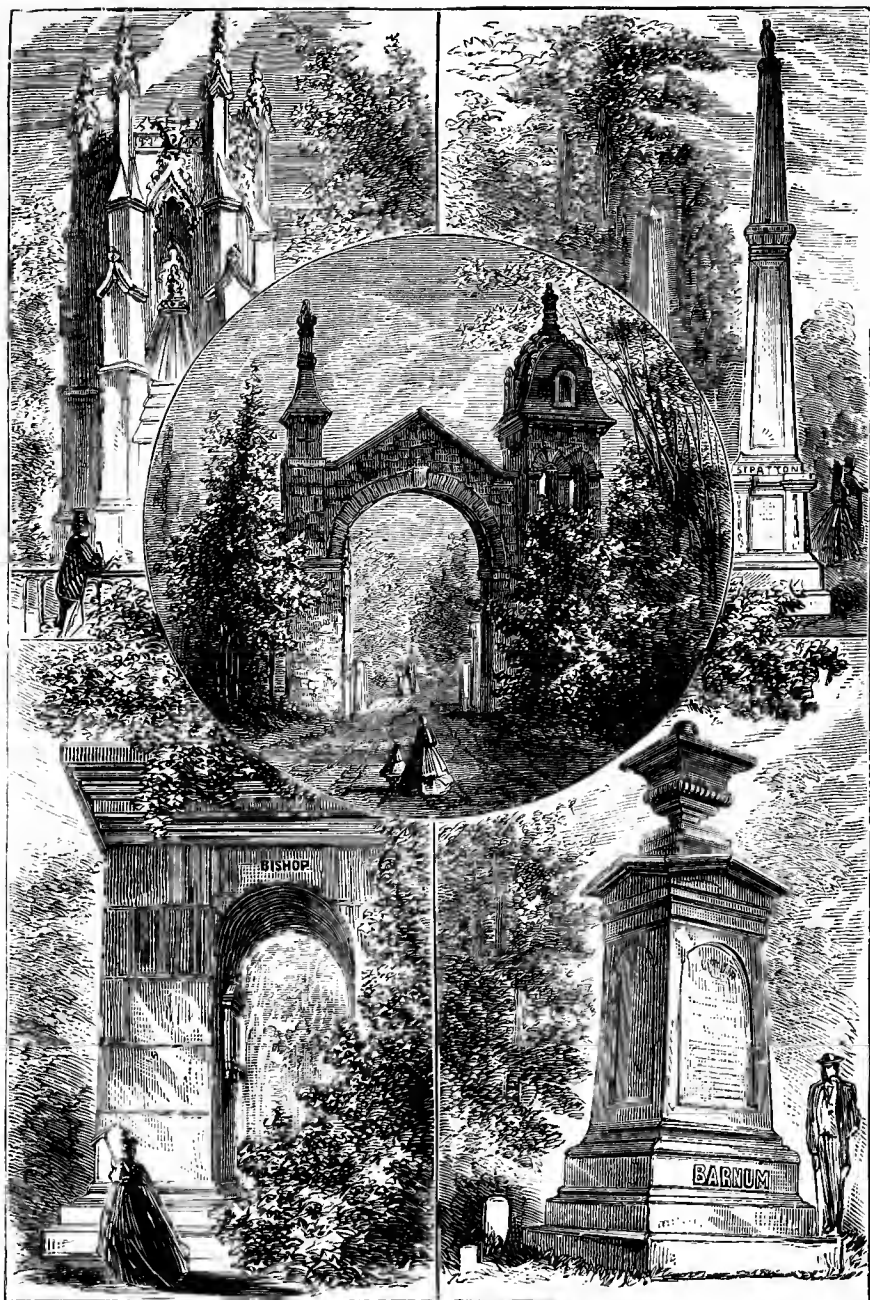
On our way, we overtook a fire-company, and I implored



them to "hurry up their machine." Arriving in sight of Iranistan, we saw huge volumes of smoke rolling out from the roof, and many men on the top of the house were passing buckets of water to pour upon the fire. Fortunately, several men had been engaged during the day in repairing the roof, and their ladders were against the house. By these means, and with the assistance of the men employed upon my grounds, water was passed very rapidly, and the flames were soon subdued without serious damage. The inmates of Iranistan were thoroughly frightened; Catherine Hayes and other visitors packed their trunks and had them carried out on the lawn; and the house came as near destruction as it well could, and escape.

While Miss Hayes was in Bridgeport, I induced her to give a concert for the benefit of the "Mountain Grove Cemetery," and the large proceeds were devoted to the erection of the beautiful stone tower and gateway at the entrance of that charming ground. The land for this cemetery, about eighty acres, had been bought by me, years before, from several farmers. I had often shot over the ground while hunting a year or two before, and had then seen its admirable capabilities for the purpose to which it was eventually devoted. After deeds for the property were secured, it was offered for a cemetery, and at a meeting of citizens several lots were subscribed for, enough, indeed, to cover the amount of the purchase-money. Thus was begun the "Mountain Grove Cemetery," which is now beautifully laid out and adorned with many tasteful and costly monuments, among them my own substantial granite monument, and a tall marble shaft surmounted by a life-size statue of General Tom Thumb.





MOUNTAIN GROVE CEMETERY.



## CHAPTER XXII.

## WORK AND PLAY.

IN 1851, 1852, and 1853, I spent much of my time at my beautiful home in Bridgeport, going very frequently to New York, to attend to matters in the Museum, but remaining in the city only a day or two at a time. I resigned the office of President of the Fairfield County Agricultural Society in 1853, but the members accepted my resignation, only on condition that it should not go into effect until after the fair of 1854. During my administration, the society held six fairs and cattle-shows—four in Bridgeport and two in Stamford—and the interest in these gatherings increased from year to year.

At the close of my presidency, in 1854, I was requested to deliver the opening speech at our county fair, which was held at Stamford. As I was not able to give agricultural advice, I delivered a portion of my lecture on the "Philosophy of Humbug." The next morning, as I was being shaved in the village barber's shop, which was at the time crowded with customers, the ticket-seller to the fair came in.

"What kind of a house did you have last night?" asked one of the gentlemen in waiting.

"Oh, first-rate, of course. Barnum always draws a crowd," was the reply of the ticket-seller, to whom I was not known.

Most of the gentlemen present, however, knew me, and they found much difficulty in restraining their laughter.

"Did Barnum make a good speech?" I asked.

"I did not hear it. I was out of the ticket-office. I guess it was pretty good, for I never heard so much laughing as there was all through his speech. But it makes no difference whether it was good or not," continued the ticket-seller, "the people will go to see Barnum."

"Barnum must be a curious chap," I remarked.

"Well, I guess he is up to all the dodges."



"Do you know him?" I asked.

"Not personally," he replied; "but I always get into the Museum for nothing. I know the door-keeper, and he slips me in free."

"Barnum would not like that probably, if he knew it," I remarked.

"But it happens he don't know it," replied the ticket-seller, in great glee.

"Barnum was on the cars the other day, on his way to Bridgeport," said I, "and I heard one of the passengers blowing him up terribly as a humbug. He was addressing Barnum at the time, but did not know him. Barnum joined in lustily, and endorsed everything the man said. When the passenger learned whom he had been addressing, I should think he must have felt rather flat."

"I should think so, too," said the ticket-seller.

This was too much, and we all indulged in a burst of laughter; still the ticket-seller suspected nothing. After I had left the shop, the barber told him who I was. I called into the ticket-office on business several times during the day, but the poor ticket-seller kept his face turned from me, and appeared so chap-fallen that I did not pretend to recognize him as the hero of the joke in the barber's shop.

On another occasion, I went to Boston by the Fall River route. Arriving before sunrise, I found but one carriage at the depôt. I immediately engaged it, and giving the driver the check for my baggage, told him to take me directly to the Revere House, as I was in great haste, and enjoined him to take in no other passengers, and I would pay his demands. He promised compliance with my wishes, but soon afterwards appeared with a gentleman, two ladies, and several children, whom he crowded into the carriage with me, and, placing their trunks on the baggage rack, started off. I thought there was no use in grumbling, and consoled myself with the reflection that the Revere House was not far away. He drove up one street and down another, for what seemed to me a very long time, but I was wedged in so closely that I could not see what route he was taking.

After half an hour's drive he halted, and I found we were at



the Lowell Railway depôt. Here my fellow passengers alighted, and, after a long delay, the driver delivered their baggage, received his fare, and was about closing the carriage-door preparatory to starting again. I was so thoroughly vexed at the shameful manner in which he had treated me that I remarked :

"Perhaps you had better wait till the Lowell train arrives ! you may possibly get another load of passengers. Of course my convenience is of no consequence. I suppose if you land me at the Revere House any time this week, it will be as much as I have a right to expect."

"I beg your pardon," he replied, "but that was Barnum and his family. He was very anxious to get here in time for the first train, so I stuck him for \$2, and now I'll carry you to the Revere House free."

"What Barnum is it ? " I asked.

"The Museum and Jenny Lind man," he replied.

The compliment and the shave both having been intended for me, I was of course mollified, and replied, "You are mistaken, my friend : I am Barnum."

"Coachee" was thunderstruck, and offered all sorts of apologies.

"A friend at the other depôt told me that I had Mr. Barnum on board," said he, "and I really supposed he meant the other man. When I come to notice you, I perceive my mistake, but I hope you will forgive me. I have carried you frequently before, and hope you will give me your custom while you are in Boston. I never will make such a mistake again."

In the spring of 1851, the Connecticut Legislature chartered the Pequonnock Bank of Bridgeport, with a capital of two hundred thousand dollars. The stock-books were opened under the direction of State commissioners, according to the laws of the Commonwealth, and nearly double the amount of capital was subscribed on the first day. I was induced to accept the Presidency of the bank, in compliance with the unanimous vote of its Directors.

In 1852, I commenced the publication of an illustrated weekly newspaper in the City of New York, which during the



first month attained a weekly circulation of seventy thousand. I eventually sold the goodwill and engravings to *Gleason's Pictorial*.

In February, 1854, numerous stock-holders applied to me to accept the Presidency of the Crystal Palace, or, as it was termed: "The Association for the Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations." Upon examining the accounts said to exist against the Association, many were pronounced indefensible by those who I supposed knew the facts in the case, while various debts existing against the concern were not exhibited when called for, and I knew nothing of their existence until after I accepted the office of President. To save it from bankruptcy, I advanced large sums of money for the payment of debts, and tried by every legitimate means to create an excitement and bring it into life. By extraneous efforts, such as the Re-inauguration, the Monster Concerts of Jullien, the Celebration of Independence, &c., it was temporarily revived, but it was uphill work, and I resigned the Presidency.





## CHAPTER XXIII.

## THE JEROME CLOCK COMPANY ENTANGLEMENT.

I NOW come to a series of events which, all things considered constitute one of the most remarkable experiences of my life—an experience which brought me much pain and many trials; which humbled my pride and threatened me with hopeless financial ruin; and yet, nevertheless, put new blood in my veins, fresh vigour in my action, warding off all temptation to rust in the repose which affluence induces, and developed, I trust, new and better elements of manliness in my character.

When the blow fell upon me, I thought I could never recover; the event has shown, however, that I have gained both in character and fortune, and what threatened for years to be my ruin, has proved one of the most fortunate happenings of my career. The “Bull Run” of my life’s battle was a crushing defeat, which unknown to me at the time, only presaged the victories which were to follow.

It is vital to the narrative that I should give some account of the new city, East Bridgeport, and my interests therein, which led directly to my subsequent complications with the Jerome Clock Company.

In 1851, I purchased from Mr. William H. Noble, of Bridgeport, the undivided half of his late father’s homestead, consisting of fifty acres of land, lying on the east side of the river, opposite the city of Bridgeport. We intended this as the nucleus of a new city, which we concluded could soon be built up, in consequence of many natural advantages that it possesses.

Before giving publicity to our plans, however, we purchased one hundred and seventy-four acres contiguous to that which we already owned, and laid out the entire property in regular streets, and lined them with trees, reserving a beautiful grove of six or eight acres, which we inclosed, and converted into a public park. We then commenced selling alternate lots, at



about the same price which the land cost us by the acre, always on condition that a suitable dwelling-house, store, or manufactory, should be erected upon the land, within one year from the date of purchase; that every building should be placed at a certain distance from the street, in a style of architecture approved by us; that the grounds should be inclosed with acceptable fences, and kept clean and neat, with other conditions which would render the locality a desirable one for respectable residents, and operate for the mutual benefit of all persons who should become settlers in the new city.

This entire property consists of a beautiful plateau of ground, lying within less than half a mile of the centre of Bridgeport city. Considering the superiority of the situation, it is a wonder that the city of Bridgeport was not originally founded upon that side of the river.

It had only been kept from market by the want of means of access. A new foot-bridge was built, connecting this place with the city of Bridgeport, and a toll-bridge, which belonged to us, was thrown open to the public free. We also obtained from the State Legislature a charter for erecting a central bridge between the two bridges already existing, and under that charter we put up a fine covered draw-bridge at a cost of \$16,000, which also we made free to the public. We built and leased to a union company of young coach-makers a large and elegant coach manufactory, which was one of the first buildings erected there, and which went into operation on the 1st of January, 1852, and was the beginning of the extensive manufactories which were subsequently built in East Bridgeport.

Besides the inducement which we held out to purchasers to obtain their lots at a merely nominal price, we advanced one-half, two-thirds, and frequently all the funds necessary to erect their buildings, permitting them to repay us in sums as small as five dollars, at their own convenience. This arrangement enabled many persons to secure and ultimately pay for homes which they could not otherwise have obtained. We looked for our profits solely to the rise in the value of the reserved lots, which we were confident must ensue.



These extraordinary inducements led many persons to build in the new city, and it began to develop and increase with a rapidity rarely witnessed in this section of the country.

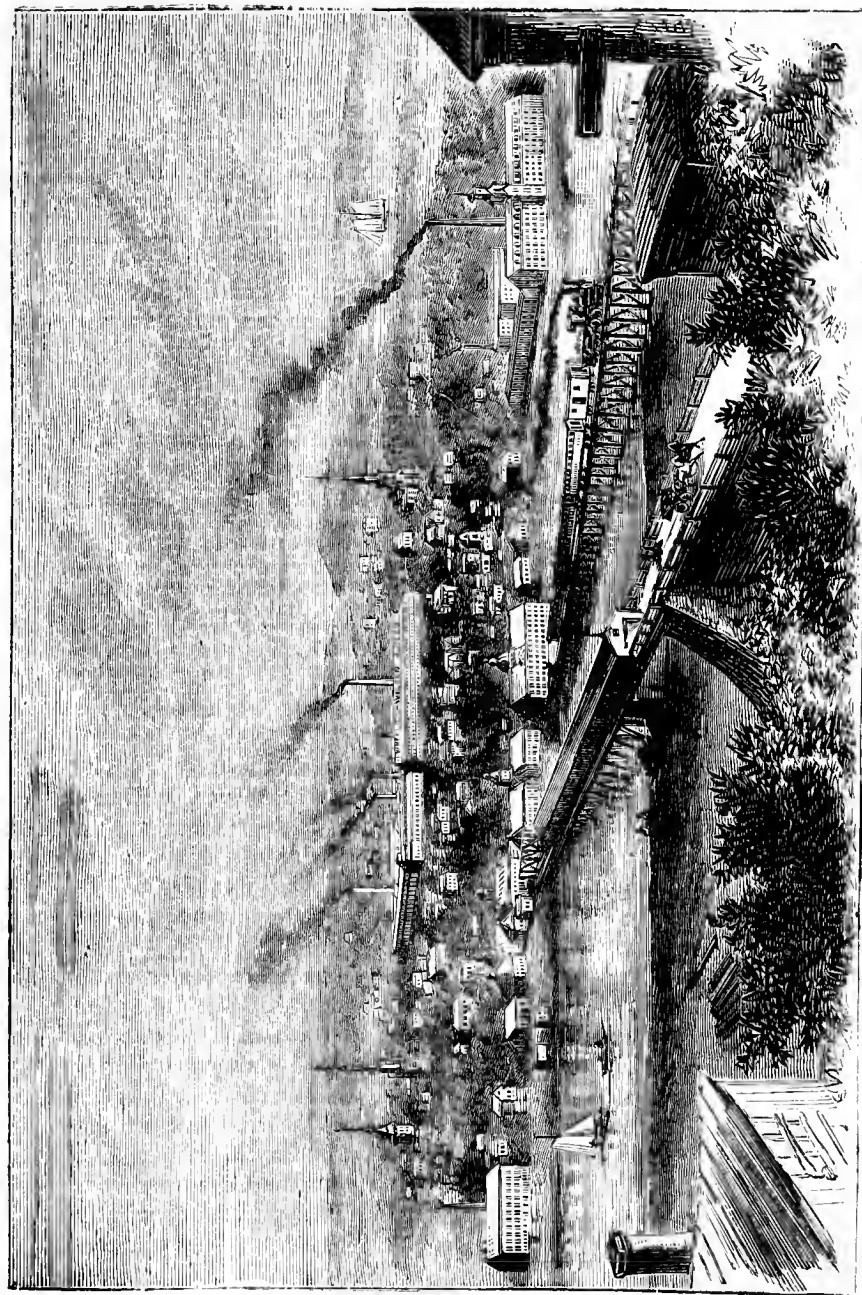
It will thus be seen that, in 1851, my pet scheme was to build up a city in East Bridgeport.

I can truly say that mere money-making was a secondary consideration in my scheme. I wanted to build a city on the beautiful plateau across the river; in the expressive phrase of the day, I "had East Bridgeport on the brain." Whoever approached me with a project which looked to the advancement of my new city, touched my weak side, and found me an eager listener, and it was in this way that the coming city connected me with that source of so many annoyances and woes, the Jerome Clock Company.

There was a small clock manufactory in the town of Litchfield, Connecticut, in which I became a stockholder to the amount of six or seven thousand dollars, and my duties as a director in the company called me occasionally to Litchfield and made me somewhat acquainted with the clock business. Thinking of plans to forward my pet East Bridgeport enterprise, it occurred to me that if the Litchfield clock concern could be transferred to my prospective new city, it would necessarily bring many families, thus increasing the growth of the place and the value of the property. Negotiations were at once commenced, and the desired transfer of the business was the result. A new stock company was formed under the name of the "Terry and Barnum Manufacturing Company," and in 1852 a factory was built in East Bridgeport.

In 1855, I received a suggestion from a citizen of New Haven, that the Jerome Clock Company, then reputed to be a wealthy concern, should be removed to East Bridgeport, and shortly afterwards I was visited at Iranistan by Mr. Chauncey Jerome, the President of that company. The result of this visit was a proposition from the agent of the company, who also held power of attorney for the President, that I should lend my name as security for \$10,000 in aid of the Jerome Clock Company, and the proffered compensation was the transfer of this great manufacturing concern, with its





EAST BRIDGEPORT.



seven hundred to one thousand operatives, to my beloved East Bridgeport. It was just the bait for the fish; I was all attention; yet I must do my judgment the justice to say that I called for proofs, strong and ample, that the great company deserved its reputation as a substantial enterprise that might safely be trusted.

Accordingly, I was shown an official report of the directors of the company, exhibiting a capital of \$400,000, and a surplus of \$187,000—in all, \$587,000. The need for \$110,000 more was on account of a dull season, and the market glutted with the goods, and immediate money demands which must be met. I was also impressed with the pathetic tale that the company was exceedingly loth to dismiss any of the operatives, who would suffer greatly if their only dependence for their daily food was taken away.

The official statement seemed satisfactory, and I cordially sympathised with the philanthropic purpose of keeping the workmen employed, even in the dull season. The company was reputed to be rich; the President, Mr. Chauncey Jerome, had built a church at New Haven, at a cost of \$40,000, and proposed to present it to a congregation; he had given a clock to a church in Bridgeport, and these things apparently showed that he, at least, thought he was wealthy. The Jerome clocks were for sale all over the world, even in China, where the Celstials were said to take out the “movements,” and use the cases for little temples for their idols, thus proving that faith was possible without “works.” So wealthy and so widely-known a company would surely be a grand acquisition to my new city.

Further testimony came in the form of a letter from the cashier of one of the New Haven banks, expressing the highest confidence in the financial strength of the concern, and much satisfaction that I contemplated giving temporary aid which would keep so many workmen and their families from suffering, and perhaps starvation. I had not, at the time, the slightest suspicion that my voluntary correspondent had any interest in the transfer of the Jerome Company from New Haven to East Bridgeport, though I was subsequently informed that the bank of which my correspondent was the



cashier was almost the largest, if not the largest creditor of the clock company.

Under all these circumstances, and influenced by the rose-coloured representations made to me, not less than by my mania to push the growth of my new city, I finally accepted the proposition, and consented to an agreement that I would lend the clock company my notes for a sum not to exceed \$50,000, and accept drafts to an amount not to exceed \$60,000. It was thoroughly understood that I was in no case to be responsible for one cent in excess of \$110,000. I also received the written guarantee of Chauncey Jerome that in no event should I lose by the loan, as he would become personally responsible for the repayment. I was willing that my notes, when taken up, should be renewed, I cared not how often, provided the stipulated maximum of \$110,000 should never be exceeded. I was weak enough, however, under the representation that it was impossible to say exactly when it would be necessary to use the notes, to put my name to several notes for \$3,000, \$5,000 and \$10,000, leaving the date of payment blank, but it was agreed that the blanks should be filled to make the notes payable in five, ten, or even sixty days from date, according to the exigencies of the case, and I was careful to keep a memorandum of the several amounts of the notes.

On the other side it was agreed that the Jerome Company should exchange its stock with the Terry and Barnum stockholders, and thus absorb that company and unite the entire business in East Bridgeport. It was scarcely a month, before the secretary wrote me that the company would soon be in a condition to "snap its fingers at the banks."

Nevertheless, three months after the consolidation of the companies, a reference to my memoranda showed that I had already become responsible for the stipulated sum of \$110,000. I was then called upon in New York by the agent, who wanted five notes of \$5,000 each, and I declined to furnish them unless I should receive in return an equal amount of my own cancelled notes, since he assured me he was cancelling these "every week." The cancelled notes were brought to me next day and I renewed them. This I did frequently, always re-



ceiving cancelled notes, till finally my confidence in the company became so established that I did not ask to see the notes that had been taken up, but furnished new accommodation paper as it was called for.

By-and-by I heard that the banks began to hesitate about discounting my paper, and, knowing that I was good for 110,000 dollars several times over, I wondered what was the matter, till the discovery came at last that my notes had not been taken up as was represented, and that some of the blank date notes had been made payable in twelve, eighteen, and twenty-four months. Further investigations revealed the frightful fact that I had endorsed for the clock company to the extent of more than half a million dollars, and most of the notes had been exchanged for old Jerome Company notes due to the banks and other creditors. My agent who made these startling discoveries came back to me with the refreshing intelligence that I was a ruined man!

Not quite; I had the mountain of Jerome debts on my back, but I found means to pay every claim against me at my bank, all my personal debts, notes to the amount of \$40,000 which banks in my neighbourhood, relying upon my personal integrity, had discounted for the clock company, and then I—failed!

What a dupe had I been! Here was a great company, pretending to be worth \$587,000, asking temporary assistance to the amount of \$110,000, coming down with a crash so soon as my helping hand was removed, and sweeping me down with it. It failed; and, even after absorbing my fortune, it paid but from twelve to fifteen per cent. of its obligations, while, to cap the climax, it never removed to East Bridgeport at all, notwithstanding this was the only condition which ever prompted me to advance one dollar to the rotten concern!

If at any time my vanity had been chilled by the fear that after my retirement from the Jenny Lind enterprise the world would forget me, this affair speedily re-assured me; I had notice enough to satisfy the most inordinate craving for notoriety. All over the country, and even across the ocean, "Barnum and the Jerome Clock Bubble" was the great newspaper theme. I was taken to pieces, analysed, put



together again, kicked, "pitched into," tumbled about, preached to, preached about, and made to serve every purpose to which a sensation-loving world could put me. Well, I was now in training, in a new school, and was learning new and strange lessons.

Yet these new lessons conveyed the old, old story. There were those who had fawned upon me in my prosperity who now jeered at my adversity; people whom I had specially favoured made special efforts to show their ingratitude; newspapers, which, when I had the means to make it an object for them to be on good terms with me, overloaded me with adulation, now attempted to overwhelm me with abuse; and then the immense amount of moralising over the "instability of human fortunes," and especially the retributive justice that is sure to follow "ill-gotten gains," which my censors assumed to be the sum and substance of my honourably acquired and industriously worked for property. I have no doubt that much of this kind of twaddle was believed by the twaddlers to be sincere; and thus my case was actual capital to certain preachers and religious editors who were in want of fresh illustrations wherewith to point their morals.

I was in the depths, but did not despond. I was confident that, with energetic purpose and Divine assistance, I should, if my health and life were spared, get on my feet again; and events have since fully justified and verified the expectation and the effort.





## CHAPTER XXIV.

## CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

HAPPILY, there is always more wheat than there is chaff. While my enemies and a few envious persons and misguided moralists were abusing and traducing me, my very misfortunes revealed to me hosts of hitherto unknown friends, who tendered to me something more than mere sympathy. Funds were offered to me in almost unbounded quantity for the support of my family and to re-establish me in business. I declined these tenders, because, on principle, I never accepted a money favour, unless I except the single receipt of a small sum which came to me by mail at this time, and anonymously, so that I could not return it. Even this small sum I at once devoted to charity towards one who needed the money far more than I did.

The generosity of my friends urged me to accept "benefits" by the score, the returns of which would have made me quite independent. There was a proposition among leading citizens in New York to give a series of "benefits," which I felt obliged to decline, though the movement in my favour deeply touched me. To show the class of men who sympathised with me in my misfortunes, and also the ground which I took in the matter, I venture to copy the following correspondence which appeared in the New York papers of the day:

"NEW YORK, June 2, 1856.

MR. P. T. BARNUM.—Dear Sir,—The financial ruin of a man of acknowledged energy and enterprise is a public calamity. The sudden blow, therefore, that has swept away, from a man like yourself, the accumulated wealth of years, justifies, we think, the public sympathy. The better to manifest our sincere respect for your liberal example in prosperity, as well as exhibit our honest admiration of your fortitude under overwhelming reverses, we propose to give that sympathy a tangible expression by soliciting your acceptance of a series of benefits for your family, the result of which may possibly secure for your wife and children a future home, or, at least, rescue them from the more immediate consequences of your misfortune.



"FREEMAN HUNT, E. K. COLLINS, ISAAC V. FOWLER, JAMES PHALEN, CORNELIUS VANDERBILT, F. B. CUTTING, JAMES W. GERARD, SIMEON DRAPER, THOMAS McELRATH, PARK GODWIN, R. F. CARMAN, GEN. C. W. SANFORD, PHILO HURD, President H.R.R.; WM. ELLSWORTH, President Brooklyn Ins. Co.; GEORGE S. DOUGHTY, President Excelsior Ins. Co.; CHAS. T. CROMWELL, ROBERT STUYVESANT, E. L. LIVINGSTON, R. BUSTEED, WM. P. FETTRIDGE, E. N. HAUGHWOUT, GEO. F. NISBETT, OSBORNE, BOARDMAN and TOWNSEND, CHARLES H. DELAVAN, I. and C. BERRIEN, FISHER and BIRD, SOLOMAN and HART, B. YOUNG, M.D., TREADWELL, ACKER and Co., St. Nicholas Hotel; JOHN WHEELER, Union Square Hotel; S. LELAND and Co., Metropolitan Hotel; ALBERT SYDNEY HOPMAN, Smithsonian Hotel; MESSRS. DELMONICO, Delmonico's; GEO. W. SHERMAN, Florence's Hotel; KINGSLEY and AINSLEE, Howard Hotel; LIBBEY and WHITNEY, Lovejoy's Hotel; HOWARD and BROWN, Tammany Hall; JONAS BARTLETT, Washington Hotel; PATTEN and LYNDE, Pacific Hotel; J. JOHNSON, Johnson's Hotel; and over 1,000 others."

To this gratifying communication I replied as follows :

"LONG ISLAND, Tuesday, June 3, 1856.

"GENTLEMEN,—I can hardly find words to express my gratitude for your very kind proposition. The popular sympathy is to me far more precious than gold, and that sympathy seems in my case to extend from my immediate neighbours, in Bridgeport, to all parts of our Union.

"Proffers of pecuniary assistance have reached me from every quarter, not only from friends, but from entire strangers. Mr. Wm. E. Burton, Miss Laura Keene, and Mr. Wm. Niblo have, in the kindest manner, tendered me the receipts of their theatres for one evening. Mr. Gough volunteered the proceeds of one of his attractive lectures: Mr. James Phalen generously offered me the free use of the Academy of Music; many professional ladies and gentlemen have urged me to accept their gratuitous services. I have, on principle, respectfully declined them all, as I beg, with the most grateful acknowledgments (at least for the present), to decline *yours*—not because a benefit, in itself, is an objectionable thing, but because I have ever made it a point to ask nothing of the public on personal grounds, and should prefer, while I can possibly avoid that contingency, to accept nothing from it without the honest conviction that I had individually given it in return a full equivalent.

"While favoured with health, I feel competent to earn an honest livelihood for myself and family. More than this I shall certainly never attempt with such a load of debt suspended *in terrorem* over me. While I earnestly thank you, therefore, for your generous consideration, gentlemen, I trust you will appreciate my desire to live unhumiliated by a sense of dependence, and believe me, sincerely yours,

"P. T. BARNUM.

"To MESSRS. FREEMAN HUNT, E. K. COLLINS, and others."



The following sentence from an editorial article in a prominent New York journal was the key-note to many similar kind notices in all parts of the Union: "It is a fact beyond dispute that Mr. Barnum's financial difficulties have accumulated from the goodness of his nature; kind-hearted and generous to a fault, it has ever been his custom to lend a helping hand to the struggling; and honest industry and enterprise have found his friendship prompt and faithful." The *Boston Journal* dwelt especially upon the use I had made of my money in my days of prosperity in assisting deserving labouring men, and in giving an impulse to business in the town where I resided. It seems only just that I should make this very brief allusion to these things, if only as an offset to the unbounded abuse of those who believed in kicking me merely because I was down; nor can I refrain from copying the following from the *Boston Saturday Evening Gazette*, of May 3, 1856

## BARNUM REDIVIVUS.

## A WORD FOR BARNUM.

BARNUM, your hand! Though you are "down,"  
 And see full many a frigid shoulder,  
 Be brave, my brick, and though they frown,  
 Prove that misfortune makes you bolder.  
 There's many a man that sneers, my hero,  
 And former praise converts to scorning,  
 Would worship—when he fears—a Nero,  
 And bend "where thrift may follow fawning."

You humbugged us—that we have seen,  
*We got our money's worth*, old fellow,  
 And though you thought our *minds were green*,  
*We never thought your heart was yellow*.  
 We knew you liberal, generous, warm,  
 Quick to assist a falling brother.  
 And, with such virtues, what's the harm  
 All memories of your faults to smother?

We had not heard the peerless Lind,  
 But for your spirit enterprising,  
 You were the man to raise the wind,  
 And make a *coup* confessed surprising.  
 You're reckoned in your native town,  
 A friend in need, a friend in danger,  
 You ever keep the latch-string down,  
 And greet with open hand the stranger.



Stiffen your upper lip. You know  
 Who are your friends and who your foes now ;  
 We pay for knowledge as we go ;  
 And though you get some sturdy blows now,  
 You've a fair field—no favours crave—  
 The storm once passed will find you braver—  
 In virtue's cause long may you wave,  
 And on the right side, never waver.

But the manifestations of sympathy which came to me from Bridgeport, where my home had been for more than ten years, were the most gratifying of all, because they showed unmistakably that my best friends, those who were most constant in their friendship and most emphatic in their esteem, were my neighbours and associates, who, of all people, knew me best. With such support I could easily endure the attacks of traducers elsewhere. The *New York Times*, April 25, 1856, under the head of "Sympathy for Barnum," published a full report of the meeting of my fellow-citizens of Bridgeport, the previous evening, to take my case into consideration.

In response to a call headed by the mayor of the city, and signed by several hundred citizens, this meeting was held in Washington Hall "for the purpose of sympathizing with P. T. Barnum, Esq., in his recent pecuniary embarrassments, and of giving some public expression to their views in reference to his financial misfortunes." It was the largest public meeting which, up to that time, had ever been held in Bridgeport. Several prominent citizens made addresses, and resolutions were adopted, declaring "that respect and sympathy were due to P. T. Barnum in return for his many acts of liberality, philanthropy and public spirit," expressing unshaken confidence in his integrity, admiration for the "fortitude and composure with which he has met reverses into which he has been dragged through no fault of his own except a too generous confidence in pretended friends," and hoping that he would "yet return to that wealth which he has so nobly employed, and to the community he has so signally benefited."

Shortly after this sympathetic meeting, a number of gentlemen in Bridgeport offered me a loan of \$50,000 if that sum would be instrumental in extricating me from my entanglement. I could not say that this amount would meet the exigency ; I could only say "wait, wait, and hope."



Meanwhile, my eyes were fully open to the entire magnitude of the deception that had been practised upon my too confiding nature. I not only discovered that my notes had been used to five times the amount I stipulated or expected, but that they had been applied, not to relieving the company from temporary embarrassment after my connection with it, but almost wholly to the redemption of old and rotten claims of years gone by. To show the extent to which the fresh victim was deliberately bled, it may be stated that I was induced to become surety to one of the New Haven banks in the sum of \$30,000 to indemnify the bank against future losses it might incur from the Jerome Company after my connection with it, and by some legerdemain this bond was made to cover *past* obligations which were older even than my knowledge of the existence of the company! In every way it seemed as if I had been cruelly swindled and deliberately defrauded.

As the clock company had gone to pieces, and was paying but from twelve to fifteen per cent. for its paper, I sent two of my friends to New Haven to ask for a meeting of the creditors, and I instructed them to say in substance for me as follows:

"Gentlemen: This is a capital practical joke! Before I negotiated with your clock company at all, I was assured by several of you, and particularly by a representative of the bank which was the largest creditor of the concern, that the Jerome Company was eminently responsible, and that the head of the same was uncommonly pious. On the strength of such representations solely, I was induced to agree to endorse and accept paper for that company to the extent of \$110,000—no more. That sum I am now willing to pay for my own verdancy, with an additional sum of \$40,000 for your cuteness, making a total of \$150,000, which you can have if you cry 'quits' with the fleeced showman and let him off."

Many of the old creditors favoured this proposition; but it was found that the indebtedness was so scattered it would be impracticable to attempt a settlement by a unanimous compromise of the creditors. It was necessary to a liquidation that my property should go into the hands of assignees; I therefore at once turned over my Bridgeport property to Connecticut assignees, and I removed my family to New



York, where I also made an assignment of all my real and personal estate, excepting what had already been transferred in Connecticut.

Every dollar which I honestly owed on my own account, I had already paid in full or had satisfactorily arranged. For the liabilities incurred by the deliberate deception which had involved me, I offered such a percentage as I thought my estate, when sold, would eventually pay; and my wife, from her own property, advanced from time to time money to take up such notes as could be secured upon these terms. It was however, a slow process.

At the age of forty-six, after the acquisition and the loss of a handsome fortune, I was once more nearly at the bottom of the ladder, and was about to begin the world again. The situation was disheartening, but I had energy, experience, health and hope.

In the summer of 1855, previous to my financial troubles, feeling that I was independent and could retire from active business, I sold the American Museum collection and goodwill to Messrs. John Greenwood, Junior, and Henry D. Butler. They paid me double the amount the collection had originally cost, giving me notes for nearly the entire amount, secured by a chattel mortgage, and hired the premises from my wife, who owned the Museum property lease, and on which, by the agreement of Messrs. Greenwood and Butler, she realized a profit of \$19,000 a year. The chattel mortgage of Messrs. Greenwood and Butler was, of course, turned over to the New York assignee with the other property.

And now there came to me a new sensation, which was, at times, terribly depressing and annoying. My wide-spread reputation for shrewdness as a showman, had induced the general belief that my means were still ample, and certain outside creditors who had bought my clock notes at a tremendous discount, and entirely on speculation, made up their minds that they must be paid at once without waiting for the slow process of the sale of my property by the assignees.

They therefore took what are termed "supplementary proceedings," which enabled them to haul me any day before a



judge, for the purpose, as they phrased it, of "putting Barnum through a course of sprouts," and which meant an examination of the debtor under oath, compelling him to disclose everything with regard to his property, his present means of living, and so on.

I repeatedly answered all questions on these points; and reports of the daily examinations were published. Still another and another, and yet another creditor would haul me up; and his attorney would ask me the same questions which had already been answered and published half a dozen times. This persistent and unnecessary annoyance created considerable sympathy for me, which was not only expressed by letters I received daily from various parts of the country, but the public press, with now and then an exception, took my part, and even the judges, before whom I appeared, said to me on more than one occasion, that as men they sincerely pitied me, but as judges, of course, they must administer the law. After awhile, however, the judges ruled that I need not answer any questions propounded to me by an attorney, if I had already answered the same question to some other attorney in a previous examination in behalf of other creditors. In fact, one of the judges, on one occasion, said pretty sharply to an examining attorney:

"This, sir, has become simply a case of persecution. Mr. Barnum has many times answered every question that can properly be put to him, to elicit the desired information; and I think it is time to stop these examinations. I advise him to not answer one interrogatory which he has replied to under any previous inquiries."

These things gave me some heart, so that at last I went up to the "sprouts" with less reluctance, and began to try to pay off my persecutors in their own coin.

On one occasion, a dwarfish little lawyer, who reminded me of "Quilp," commenced his examination in behalf of a note-shaver, who held a thousand dollar note, which it seemed he had bought for seven hundred dollars. After the oath had been administered, the "limb of the law" arranged his pen, ink and paper, and in a loud voice, and with a most peremptory and supercilious air, asked:



"What is your name, sir?"

I answered him; and his next question, given in a louder and more peremptory tone, was:

"What is your business?"

"Attending bar," I meekly replied.

"Attending bar!" he echoed, with an appearance of much surprise, "attending bar! Why, don't you profess to be a temperance man—a teetotaler?"

"I do," I replied.

"And yet, sir, do you have the audacity to assert that you peddle rum all day, and drink none yourself?"

"I doubt whether that is a relevant question," I said, in a low tone of voice.

"I will appeal to his honour, the judge, if you don't answer it instantly," said Quilp, in great glee.

"I attend bar, and yet never drink intoxicating liquors," I replied.

"Where do you attend bar, and for whom?" was the next question.

"I attend the bar of this court, nearly every day, for the benefit of twopenny would-be lawyers and their greedy clients," I answered.

A loud tittering in the vicinity only added to the vexation which was already visible on the countenance of my interrogator, and he soon brought his examination to a close.

On another occasion, a young lawyer was pushing his inquiries to a great length, when, in a half-laughing, apologetic tone, he said:

"You see, Mr. Barnum, I am searching after the small things; I am willing to take even the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table!"

"Which are you, Lazarus or one of his dogs?" I asked.

"I guess a bloodhound would not smell out much on this trail," he said, good-naturedly, adding that he had no more questions to ask.

Just after my failure, and on account of the ill-health of my wife, I spent a portion of the summer with my family in the farmhouse of Mr. Charles Howell, at Westhampton, on Long Island. The place is a mile west of Quogue, and was



then called "Ketchabonneck." The thrifty and intelligent farmers of the neighbourhood were in the habit of taking summer boarders, and the place had become a favourite resort. Mr. Howell's farm lay close upon the ocean, and I found the residence a cool and delightful one. Surf bathing, fishing, shooting, and fine roads for driving made the season pass pleasantly, and the respite from active life and immediate annoyance from my financial troubles was a very great benefit to me.

One morning we discovered that the waves had thrown upon the beach a young black whale some twelve feet long. It was dead, but the fish was hard and fresh, and I bought it for a few dollars from the men who had taken possession of it. I sent it at once to the Museum, where it was exhibited in a huge refrigerator for a few days, creating considerable excitement, the general public considering it "a big thing on ice," and the managers gave me a share of the profits, which amounted to a sufficient sum to pay the entire board bill of my family for the season.

This incident both amused and amazed my Long Island landlord. "Well, I declare," said he, "that beats all; you are the luckiest man I ever heard of. Here you come and board for four months with your family, and when your time is nearly up, and you are getting ready to leave, out rolls a black whale on our beach, a thing never heard of before in this vicinity, and you take that whale and pay your whole bill with it."

Strange to say, my new city, which had been my ruin, was to be my redemption.

The now gigantic Wheeler and Wilson Sewing Machine Company was then doing a comparatively small, yet rapidly growing business, at Watertown, Connecticut. The Terry and Barnum clock factory was standing idle, almost worthless, in East Bridgeport, and Wheeler and Wilson saw in the empty building, the situation, the ease of communication with New York, and other advantages, precisely what they wanted, provided they could procure the premises at a rate which would compensate them for the expense and trouble of removing their establishment from Watertown. The clock



factory was sold for a trifle, and the Wheeler and Wilson Company moved into it and speedily enlarged it. It was a fresh impulse towards the building up of a new city, and the consequent increase of the value of the land belonging to my estate.

Growing trees, money at interest, and rapidly rising real estate, work for their owners all night as well as all day, Sundays included, and when the proprietors are asleep or away. With the design of co-operating in the new accumulation, and of saving something to add to the amount, I made up my mind to go to Europe again. I was anxious for a change of scene and for active employment, and equally desirous of getting away from the immediate pressure of troubles which no effort on my part could then remove. While my affairs were working out themselves in their own way, and in the speediest manner possible, I might be doing something for myself and for my family.

Accordingly, leaving all my business affairs at home in the hands of my friends, early in 1857 I set sail once more for England, taking with me General Tom Thumb, and also little Cordelia Howard and her parents. This young girl had attained an extended reputation for her artistic personation of "Little Eva" in the play of "Uncle Tom," and she displayed a precocious talent in her rendering of other juvenile characters.





## CHAPTER XXV.

## ABROAD AGAIN.

WHEN I reached London, I found Mr. Albert Smith, who, when I first knew him was a dentist, a literary hack, a contributor to *Punch*, and a writer for the magazines, now transformed into a first-class showman in the full tide of success in my own old exhibition quarters in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. He was exhibiting a panorama of his ascent of Mont Blanc. His lecture was full of amusing and interesting incidents, illustrative of his remarkable experiences in accomplishing the difficult feat.

Calling upon Albert Smith, I found him the same kind, cordial friend as ever, and he at once put me on the free list at his entertainment, and insisted upon my dining frequently with him at his favourite club, the "Garriick."

The first time I witnessed his exhibition, he gave me a sly wink from the stage at the moment of his describing a scene in a golden chamber of St. Ursula's church, in Cologne, where the old sexton was narrating the story of the ashes and bones of the eleven thousand innocent virgins who, according to tradition, were sacrificed on a certain occasion. One of the characters whom he pretended to have met several times on his trip to Mont Blanc, was a Yankee, whom he named "Phineas Cutecraft." The wink came at the time he introduced Phineas in the Cologne Church, and made him say at the end of the sexton's story about the virgins' bones:

"Old fellow, what will you take for that hull lot of bones? I want them for my Museum in America."

When the question had been interpreted to the old German, he exclaimed in horror, according to Albert Smith:

"Mein Gott! it is impossible! We will never sell the Virgins' bones!"

"Never mind," replied Phineas Cutecraft: "I'll send another lot of bones to my Museum, swear mine are the



real bones of the Virgins of Cologne, and burst up your show!"

This always excited the heartiest laughter: but Mr. Smith knew very well that I would at once recognise it as a paraphrase of the scene wherein he had figured with me, in 1844, at the porter's lodge of Warwick Castle. In the course of the entertainment, I found he had woven in numerous anecdotes I had told him at that time, and many incidents of our excursion were also travestied and made to contribute to the interest of his description of the ascent of Mont Blanc.

When we went to the Garrick Club that day, Albert Smith introduced me to several of his acquaintances as his "teacher in the show business." As we were quietly dining together, he remarked, that I must have recognised several old acquaintances in the anecdotes at his entertainment. Upon my answering that I did, "Indeed," he replied, "you are too old a showman not to know that in order to be popular, we must snap up and localise all the good things which we come across." By thus engrafting his various experiences upon this Mont Blanc entertainment, Albert Smith succeeded in serving up a salmagundi feast which was relished alike by royal and less distinguished palates.

When Thackeray made his first visit to the United States, I think in 1852, he called on me at the Museum with a letter of introduction from our mutual friend, Albert Smith. He spent an hour with me, mainly for the purpose of asking advice in regard to the management of the course of lectures on "The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century," which he proposed to deliver, as he did afterwards, with very great success, in the principal cities of the Union. I gave him the best advice I could as to the management, and the cities he ought to visit, for which he was very grateful, and he called on me whenever he was in New York. I also saw him repeatedly when he came to America the second time with his admirable lectures on "The Four Georges," which, it will be remembered, he delivered in the United States in the season of 1855-56, before he read them to the audiences in Great Britain. My relations with this great novelist, I am proud to say, were cordial and intimate; and now, when



I called upon him, in 1857, at his own house, he grasped me heartily by the hand and said :

" Mr. Barnum, I admire you more than ever. I have read the accounts in the papers of the examinations you underwent in the New York courts; and the positive pluck you exhibit under your pecuniary embarrassments is worthy of all praise. You would never have received credit for the philosophy you manifest, if these financial misfortunes had not overtaken you."

I thanked him for his compliment, and he continued :

" But tell me, Barnum, are you really in need of present assistance? For if you are, you must be helped."

" Not in the least," I replied, laughing; " I need more money in order to get out of bankruptcy, but I intend to earn it; but so far as daily bread is concerned, I am quite at ease, for my wife is worth £30,000 or £40,000."

" Is it possible?" he exclaimed, with evident delight; " well, now, you have lost all my sympathy; why, that is more than I ever expect to be worth; I shall be sorry for you no more."

During my stay in London, I met Thackeray several times, and on one occasion I dined with him. He repeatedly expressed his obligations to me for the advice and assistance I had given him on the occasion of his first lecturing visit to the United States.

Otto Goldschmidt, the husband of Jenny Lind, also called on me in London. He and his wife were then living in Dresden, and he said the first thing his wife desired him to ask me was, whether I was in want. I assured him that I was not, although I was managing to live in an economical way, and my family would soon come over to reside in London. He then advised me to take them to Dresden, saying that living was very cheap there; and, he added, " my wife will gladly look up a proper house for you to live in." I thankfully declined his proffered kindness, as Dresden was too far away from my business.

My old friends, Julius Benedict and Giovanni Belletti, called on me, and we had some very pleasant dinners together, when we talked over incidents of their travels in America. Among the gentlemen whom I met in London,



some of them quite frequently at dinners, were Mr. George Augustus Sala, Mr. Edmund Yates, Mr. Horace Mayhew, Mr. Alfred Bunn, Mr. Lumley, of Her Majesty's Theatre, Mr. Buckstone, of the Haymarket, Mr. Charles Kean, our princely countryman, Mr. George Peabody, Mr. Bates, of Baring Brothers and Co., Mr. Oxenford, dramatic critic of the *London Times*, Dr. Ballard, the American dentist, and many other eminent persons.

I had numerous offers from professional friends, on both sides of the Atlantic, who supposed me to be in need of employment. Mr. Barney Williams, who had not then acted in England, proposed, in the kindest manner, to make me his agent for a tour through Great Britain, and to give me one-third of the profits which he and Mrs. Williams might make by their acting. Mr. S. M. Pettengill, of New York, the newspaper advertising agent, offered me the fine salary of \$10,000 a year to transact business for him in Great Britain. He wrote to me: "When you failed in consequence of the Jerome clock notes, I felt that your creditors were dealing hard with you; that they should have let you up and given you a chance, and they would have fared better, and I wish I was a creditor so as to show what I would do." These offers, both from Mr. Williams and Mr. Pettengill, I felt obliged to decline.

Mr. Lumley, manager of Her Majesty's Theatre, used to send me an order for a private box for every opera night, and I frequently availed myself of his courtesy.

Meanwhile, I was by no means idle. Cordelia Howard as "Little Eva," with her mother as the inimitable "Topsy," were highly successful in London and other large cities, while General Tom Thumb, returning after so long an absence, drew crowded houses wherever he went. These were strong spokes in the wheel that was moving slowly but surely in the effort to get me out of debt, and, if possible, to save some portion of my real estate. Of course, it was not generally known that I had any interest whatever in either of these exhibitions; if it had been, possibly some of the clock creditors would have annoyed me; but I busied myself in these and in other ways, working industriously and making



much money, which I constantly remitted to my trusty agent at home.

After a pleasant and successful season of several weeks in London and in the provinces, I took the little General into Germany, going from London to Paris, and from thence to Strasbourg and Baden-Baden.

I dreaded to pass the Custom House at Kehl, nearly opposite Strasbourg, and the first town on the German border at that point. I knew that I had no baggage which was rightfully subject to duty, as I had nothing but my necessary clothing, and the package of placards and lithographs, illustrating the General's exhibitions. As the official was examining my trunks, I assured him in French that I had nothing subject to duty, but he made no reply, and deliberately handled every article in my luggage. He then cut the strings to the large packages of show-bills. I asked him in French whether he understood that language. He gave a grunt, which was the only audible sound I could get out of him, and then laid my show-bills and lithographs on his scales as if to weigh them. I was much excited. An English gentleman, who spoke German, kindly offered to act as my interpreter.

"Please to tell him," said I, "that those bills and lithographs are not articles of commerce; that they are simply advertisements."

My English friend did as I requested; but it was of no use; the Custom House officer kept piling them upon his scales. I grew more excited.

"Please tell him I give them away," I said. The translation of my assertion into German did not help me; a double grunt from the functionary was the only response. Tom Thumb, meanwhile, jumped about like a little monkey, for he was fairly delighted at my worry and perplexity. Finally, I said to my new-found English friend: "Be good enough to tell the officer to keep the bills if he wants them, and that I will not pay duty on them, anyhow."

He was duly informed of my determination, but he was immovable. He lighted his huge Dutch pipe, got the exact weight, and, marking it down, handed it to a clerk, who copied it on his book, and solemnly passed it over to another





THE "CUSTOMS" OF THE COUNTRY.



clerk, who copied it on still another book; a third clerk then took it, and copied it on to a printed bill, the size of a half letter sheet, which was duly stamped in red ink with several official devices. By this time I was in a profuse perspiration; and, as the document passed from clerk to clerk, I told them they need not trouble themselves to make out a bill, for I would not pay it; they would get no duty, and they might keep the property.

To be sure, I could not spare the placards for any length of time, for they were exceedingly valuable to me as advertisements, and I could not easily have duplicated them in Germany; but I was determined I should not pay duties on articles which were not merchandise. Every transfer, therefore, of the bill to a new clerk, gave me a fresh twinge, for I imagined that every clerk added more charges, and that every charge was a tighter turn to the vise which held my fingers. Finally, the last clerk defiantly thrust in my face the terrible official document, on which were scrawled certain cabalistic characters, signifying the amount of money I should be forced to pay to the German Government before I could have my property. I would not touch it; but resolved I would really leave my packages until I could communicate with one of our consuls in Germany, and I said as much to the English gentleman who had kindly interpreted for me.

He took the bill, and examining it, burst into a loud laugh "Why, it is but fifteen kreutzers!" he said.

"How much is that?" I asked, feeling for the golden sovereigns in my pocket.

"Sixpence!" was the reply.

I was astonished and delighted, and, as I handed out the money, I begged him to tell the officials that the Custom House charge would not pay the cost of the paper on which it was written. But this was a very fair illustration of sundry red-tape dealings in other countries as well as in Germany.

I found Baden a delightful little town, cleaner and neater than any city I had ever visited.

When our preliminary arrangements were completed, the General's attendants, carriage, ponies and liveried coachman



and footmen arrived at Baden-Baden, and were soon seen in the streets. The excitement was intense and increased from day to day. Several crowned heads, princes, lords and ladies, who were spending the season at Baden-Baden, with a vast number of wealthy pleasure-seekers and travellers, crowded the saloon in which the General exhibited, during the entire time we remained in the place. The charges for admission were much higher than had been demanded in any other city.

From Baden-Baden we went to other celebrated German Spas, including Ems, Homburg, and Wiesbaden. These were then all fashionable gambling as well as watering-places, and during our visits they were crowded with visitors from all parts of Europe. Our exhibitions were attended by thousands who paid the same high prices that were charged for admission at Baden-Baden, and at Wiesbaden, among many distinguished persons, the King of Holland came to see the little General. These exhibitions were among the most profitable that had ever been given, and I was able to remit thousands of dollars to my agents in the United States, to aid in re-purchasing my real estate, and to assist in taking up such clock notes as were offered for sale. A short but very remunerative season at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, the home and starting-place of the great house of the Rothschilds, assisted me largely in carrying out these purposes.

We exhibited at Mayence, and several other places in the vicinity, reaping golden harvests everywhere, and then went down the Rhine to Cologne.

We remained at Cologne only long enough to visit the famous cathedral and to see other curiosities and works of art, and then pushed on to Rotterdam and Amsterdam.

We visited the Hague, the capital, and the finest city in Holland.

I did not miss visiting the great government museum, as I wished particularly to see the rich collection of Japan ware and arms, made during the many years when the Dutch carried on almost exclusively the entire foreign trade with the Japanese. I spent several days in minutely examining these curious manufactures of a people who were then almost



as little known to nations generally as are the inhabitants of the planet Jupiter.

On the first day of my visit to this museum, I stood for an hour before a large case containing a most unique and extraordinary collection of fabulous animals, made from paper and other materials, and looking as natural and genuine as the stuffed skins of any animals in the American Museum. There were serpents two yards long, with a head and pair of feet at each end; frogs as large as a man, with human hands and feet; turtles with three heads; monkeys with two heads and six legs; scores of equally curious monstrosities; and at least two dozen mermaids, of all sorts and sizes. Looking at these "sirens" I easily divined from whence the Feejee Mermaid originated.

After a truly delightful visit in Holland, we went back to England; and, proceeding to Manchester, opened our exhibition. For several days the hall was crowded to overflowing at each of the three, and sometimes four, entertainments we gave every day.

It was necessary now for me to return for a few weeks to America, to assist personally in forwarding a settlement of the clock difficulties. So leaving the little General in the hands of trusty and competent agents to carry on the exhibitions in my absence, I set my face once more towards home and the west, and took steamer at Liverpool for New York.

The trip, like most of the passages which I have made across the Atlantic, was an exceedingly pleasant one. These frequent voyages were to me the rests, the reliefs from almost unremitting industry, anxiety, and care, and I always managed to have more or less fun on board ship every time I crossed the ocean. During the present trip, for amusement and to pass away the time, the passengers got up a number of mock trials, which afforded a vast deal of fun.

After several of these trials had been held, a dozen or more of the passengers secretly put their heads together and resolved to place the "showman" on trial for his life. An indictment, covering twenty pages, was drawn up by several legal gentlemen among the passengers, charging him with being the Prince of Humbugs, and enumerating a dozen



special counts, containing charges of the most absurd and ridiculous description. Witnesses were then brought together, and privately instructed what to say and do. Two or three days were devoted to arranging this mighty prosecution. When everything was ready, I was arrested, and the formidable indictment read to me. I saw at a glance that time and talent had been brought into requisition, and that my trial was to be more elaborate than any that had preceded it. I asked for half an hour to prepare for my defence, which was granted. Meanwhile, seats were arranged to accommodate the court and spectators, and extra settees were placed for the ladies on the upper deck, where they could look down, see and hear all that transpired. Curiosity was on tip-toe, for it was evident that this was to be a long, exciting and laughable trial. At the end of half an hour the judge was on the bench, the jury had taken their places; the witnesses were ready; the counsel for the prosecution, four in number, with pens, ink, and paper in profusion, were seated, and everything seemed ready. I was brought in by a special constable, the indictment read, and I was asked to plead guilty, or not guilty. I rose, and in a most solemn manner, stated that I could not conscientiously plead guilty or not guilty; that I had, in fact, committed many of the acts charged in the indictment, but these acts, I was ready to show, were not criminal, but on the contrary, worthy of praise. My plea was received and the first witness called.

He testified to having visited the prisoner's Museum, and of being humbugged by the Feejee Mermaid; the nurse of Washington; and by other curiosities natural and unnatural. The questions and answers having been all arranged in advance, everything worked smoothly. Acting as my own counsel, I cross-examined the witness by simply asking whether he saw anything else in the Museum besides what he had mentioned.

"Oh! yes, I saw thousands of other things."

"Were they curious?"

"Certainly; many of them very astonishing."

"Did you witness a dramatic representation in the Museum?"



"Yes, sir, a very good one."

"What did you pay for all this?"

"Twenty-five cents."

"That will do, sir; you can step down."

A second, third, and fourth witness were called, and the examination was similar to the foregoing. Another witness then appeared to testify in regard to another count of the indictment. He stated that for several weeks he was the guest of the prisoner, at his country residence, Iranistan, and he gave a most amusing description of the various schemes and contrivances which were there originated, for the purpose of being carried out at some future day in the Museum.

"How did you live there?" asked one of the counsel for the prosecution.

"Very well; indeed; in the daytime," was the reply; "plenty of the best to eat and drink, except liquors. In bed, however, it was impossible to sleep. I rose the first night, struck a light, and on examination found myself covered with myriads of little bugs, so small as to be almost imperceptible. By using my microscope I discovered them to be infantile bed-bugs. After the first night, I was obliged to sleep in the coach-house in order to escape this annoyance."

Of course this elicited much mirth. The first question put on the cross-examination was this:

"Are you a naturalist, sir?"

The witness hesitated. In all the drilling that had taken place before the trial, neither the counsel nor witnesses had thought of what questions might come up in the cross-examination, and now, not seeing the drift of the question, the witness seemed a little bewildered, and the counsel for the prosecution looked puzzled.

The question was repeated with some emphasis.

"No, sir," replied the witness, hesitatingly, "I am not a naturalist."

"Then, sir, not being a naturalist, dare you affirm that those microscopic insects were not humbugs instead of bed-bugs?"—(here the prisoner was interrupted by a universal shout of laughter, in which the solemn judge himself joined)—"and if they were humbugs, I suppose that even the learned



counsel opposed to me will not claim that they were out of place? ”

“They may have been humbugs,” replied the witness.

“That will do, sir; you may go,” said I; and at the same time, turning to the array of counsel, I remarked, with a smile, “You had better have a naturalist for your next witness, gentlemen.”

“Don’t be alarmed, sir, we have got one, and we will now introduce him,” replied the counsel.

The next witness testified that he was a planter from Georgia, that some years since the prisoner visited the plantation with a show, and that while there he discovered an old worthless donkey belonging to the planter, and bought him for five dollars. The next year the witness visited Iranistan, the country seat of the prisoner, and, while walking about the grounds, his old donkey, recognising his former master, brayed; “whereupon,” continued the witness, “I walked up to the animal and found that two men were engaged in sticking wool upon him, and this animal was afterwards exhibited by the prisoner as the woolly horse.”

The whole court—spectators, and even the “prisoner” himself—were convulsed with laughter at the gravity with which the “planter” gave his very ludicrous testimony.

“What evidence have you,” I inquired, “that this was the same donkey which you sold to me?”

“The fact that the animal recognised me, as was evident from his braying as soon as he saw me.”

“Are you a naturalist, sir?”

“Yes, I am,” replied the planter, with emphasis, as much as to say, “You can’t catch me as you did the other witness.”

“Oh! you are a naturalist, are you? Then, sir, I ask you, as a naturalist, do you not know it to be a fact in natural history, that one jackass always brays as soon as he sees another?”

This question was received with shouts of laughter, in the midst of which the nonplussed witness backed out of court, and all the efforts of special constables, and even the high sheriff himself, were unavailing in getting him again on the witness-stand.



This trial lasted two days, to the great delight of all on board. After my success with the "naturalist," not one-half of the witnesses would appear against me. In my final argument I sifted the testimony, analysed its bearings, ruffled the learned counsel, disconcerted the witnesses, flattered the judge and jury, and when the judge had delivered his charge the jury acquitted me without leaving their seats. The judge received the verdict, and then announced that he should fine the naturalist for the mistake he made, as to the cause of the donkey's braying, and he should also fine the several witnesses who, through fear of cross-fire, had refused to testify.

The trial afforded a pleasant topic of conversation for the rest of the voyage; and the morning before arriving in port, a vote of thanks was passed to me, in consideration of the amusement I had intentionally and unintentionally furnished to the passengers during the voyage.

Mr. James D. Johnson, of Bridgeport, one of my assignees who had written to me that my personal presence might facilitate a settlement of my affairs, told me, soon after my arrival, that there was no probability of disposing of Iranistan at present, and that I might as well move my family into the house.

Iranistan, which had been closed and unoccupied for more than two years, was once more opened to the carpenters and painters whom Mr. Johnson sent there to put the house in order. He agreed with me that it was best to keep the property as long as possible, and in the interval, till a purchaser for the estate appeared, or till it was forced to auction, to take up the clock notes whenever they were offered.

I was staying at the Astor House, in New York, when, on the morning of December 18, 1857, I received a telegram from my brother Philo F. Barnum, dated at Bridgeport, and informing me that Iranistan was burned to the ground that morning. The alarm was given at eleven o'clock on the night of the 17th, and the fire burned till one o'clock on the morning of the 18th. My beautiful Iranistan was gone! This was not only a serious loss to my estate, for it had probably cost at least \$150,000, but it was generally regarded as a public calamity. It was the only building in its peculiar

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style of architecture of any pretension in America, and many persons visited Bridgeport every year expressly to see Iranistan. The insurance on the mansion had usually been about \$62,000, but I had let some of the policies expire without renewing them, so that at the time of the fire there was only \$28,000 insurance on the property. Most of the furniture and pictures were saved, generally in a damaged state.

Subsequently, my assignees sold the grounds and out-houses of Iranistan to the late Elias Howe, Junior, the celebrated inventor of the needle for sewing machines. The property brought \$50,000, which, with the \$28,000 insurance, went into my assets to satisfy clock creditors.





## CHAPTER XXVI.

## THE ART OF MONEY-GETTING.

SEEING the necessity of making more money to assist in extricating me from my financial difficulties, and leaving my affairs in the hands of Mr. James D. Johnson (my wife and youngest daughter, Pauline, boarding with my eldest daughter, Mrs. Thompson, in Bridgeport) early in 1858 I went back to England, and took Tom Thumb to all the principal places in Scotland and Wales, giving many exhibitions and making much money which was remitted, as heretofore, to my agents and assignees in America.

Finding, after awhile, that my personal attention was not needed in the Tom Thumb exhibition, and confiding him almost wholly to agents who continued the tour through Great Britain, under my general advice and instruction, I turned my individual attention to a new field. At the suggestion of several American gentlemen, resident in London, I prepared a lecture on "The Art of Money-Getting." I told my friends that, considering my clock complications, I thought I was more competent to speak on "The Art of Money Losing;" but they encouraged me by reminding me that I could not have lost money, if I had not previously possessed the faculty of making it. They further assured me that my name having been intimately associated with the Jenny Lind concerts and other great money-making enterprises, the lecture would be sure to prove attractive and profitable.

The old clocks ticked in my ear the reminder that I should improve every opportunity to "turn an honest penny," and my lecture was duly announced for delivery in the great St. James's Hall, Regent Street, Piccadilly. It was thoroughly advertised—a feature I never neglected—and, at the appointed time, the hall, which would hold three thousand people, was completely filled, at the prices of three and two shillings (seventy-five and fifty cents) per seat, according to

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location. It was the evening of December 29, 1858. I could see in my audience all my American friends who had suggested this effort; all my theatrical and literary friends; and, as I saw several gentlemen whom I knew to be connected with the leading London papers, I felt sure that my success or failure would be duly chronicled next morning. There was, moreover, a general audience that seemed eager to see the "showman" of whom they had heard so much, and to catch from his lips the "art" which, in times past, had contributed so largely to his success in life. Stimulated by these things, I tried to do my best, and I think I did it.

Nearly every paper in London had something to say about my lecture, and in almost every instance the matter and manner of the lecturer were unqualifiedly approved. Indeed, the profusion of praise quite overwhelmed me. The *London Times*, December 30, 1858, concluded a half-column criticism with the following paragraph:

"We are bound to admit that Mr. Barnum is one of the most entertaining lecturers that ever addressed an audience on a theme universally intelligible. The appearance of Mr. Barnum, it should be added, has nothing of the 'charlatan' about it, but is that of the thoroughly respectable man of business; and he has at command a fund of dry humour that convulses everybody with laughter, while he himself remains perfectly serious. A sonorous voice and an admirably clear delivery complete his qualifications as a lecturer, in which capacity he is no 'humbug,' either in a higher or lower sense of the word."

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#### SYNOPSIS OF MY LECTURE ON THE ART OF MONEY-GETTING.

In the United States, where we have more land than people, it is not at all difficult for persons in good health to make money.

There are so many avenues of success open, so many vocations which are not crowded, that any person of either sex who is willing, at least for the time being, to engage in any respectable occupation that offers, may find lucrative employment.

Those who really desire to attain an independence, have only to set their minds upon it, and adopt the proper means as they do in regard to any other object which they wish to accomplish, and the thing is easily done. But however easy



it may be found to make money, it is the most difficult thing in the world to keep it. The road to wealth is, as Dr. Franklin truly says, "as plain as the road to mill." It consists simply in expending less than we earn. There are many who think that economy consists in saving cheese-parings and candle ends, in cutting off twopence from the laundress's bill, and doing all sorts of little, mean, dirty things. Economy is not meanness.

Dr. Franklin speaks of "saving at the spigot and wasting at the bung-hole;" "penny wise and pound foolish." *Punch*, in speaking of this "one-idea" class of people says, "they are like the man who bought a penny herring for his family's dinner, and then hired a coach and four to take it home."

When you find that you have no surplus at the end of the year, and yet have a good income, mark down every item of expenditure. Post it every day or week in two columns, one headed "necessaries" or even "comforts," and the other headed "luxuries," and you will find that the latter column will be frequently ten times greater than the former. The real comforts of life cost but a small portion of what most of us can earn. Dr. Franklin says: "It is the eyes of others and not our own eyes which ruin us. If all the world were blind except myself I should not care for fine clothes or furniture."

True economy consists in always making the income exceed the out-go. Wear the old clothes a little longer if necessary; dispense with the new pair of gloves; mend the old dress; live on plainer food if needed; so that, under all circumstances, unless some unforeseen accident occurs, there will be a margin in favour of the income.

Men and women accustomed to gratify every whim and caprice, will find it hard, at first, to cut down their various unnecessary expenses, and will feel it a great self-denial to live in a smaller house than they have been accustomed to, with less expensive furniture, less company, less costly clothing, fewer servants, a less number of balls, parties, theatre-goings, carriage-ridings, pleasure excursions, cigar-smokings, liquor-drinkings, and other extravagances; but, after all, if they will try the plan of laying by a "nest-egg," or, in other words, a small sum of money, at interest or judiciously in-

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vested in land, they will be surprised at the pleasure to be derived from constantly adding to their little "pile," as well as from all the economical habits which are engendered by this course.

The foundation of success in life is good health: that is the substratum of fortune; it is also the basis of happiness. A person cannot accumulate a fortune very well when he is sick. He has no ambition; no incentive; no force. Of course, there are those who have bad health and cannot help it; you cannot expect that such persons can accumulate wealth; but there are a great many in poor health who need not be so.

If, then, sound health is the foundation of success and happiness in life, how important it is that we should study the laws of health, which is but another expression for the laws of nature! The closer we keep to the laws of nature, the nearer we are to good health, and yet how many persons there are who pay no attention to natural laws.

We ought to know that the "sin of ignorance" is never winked at in regard to the violation of nature's laws; their infraction always brings the penalty. A child may thrust its finger into the flames, without knowing it will burn, and so suffer; repentance, even, will not stop the smart.

Many persons knowingly violate the laws of nature against their better impulses, for the sake of fashion. For instance, there is one thing that nothing living, except a vile worm, ever naturally loved, and that is tobacco; yet how many persons there are who deliberately train an unnatural appetite, and overcome this implanted aversion for tobacco to such a degree that they get to love it!

This artificial appetite, like jealousy, "grows by what it feeds on;" when you love that which is unnatural, a stronger appetite is created for the hurtful thing than the natural desire for what is harmless. There is an old proverb which says that "habit is second nature," but an artificial habit is stronger than nature. Take, for instance, an old tobacco-chewer; his love for the "quid" is stronger than his love for any particular kind of food. He can give up roast beef easier than give up tobacco.



These remarks apply with tenfold force to the use of intoxicating drinks. To make money requires a clear brain. A man has got to see that two and two make four; he must lay all his plans with reflection and forethought, and closely examine all the details and the ins and outs of business. As no man can succeed in business unless he has a brain to enable him to lay his plans, and reason to guide him in their execution, so, no matter how bountifully a man may be blessed with intelligence, if the brain is muddled, and his judgment warped by intoxicating drinks, it is impossible for him to carry on business successfully. How many good opportunities have passed, never to return, while a man was sipping a "social glass" with his friend! How many foolish bargains have been made under the influence of the "nervine," which temporarily makes its victim think he is rich. How many important chances have been put off until to-morrow, and then for ever, because the wine cup has thrown the system into a state of lassitude, neutralising the energies so essential to success in business. Verily, "Wine is a mocker."

**DON'T MISTAKE YOUR VOCATION.**—The safest plan, and the one most sure of success for the young man starting in life, is to select the vocation which is most congenial to his tastes. Unless a man enters upon the vocation nature intended him for, and best suited to his peculiar genius, he cannot succeed. I am glad to believe that the majority of persons do find their right vocation. Yet we see many who have mistaken their calling, from the blacksmith to the clergyman. You will see, for instance, that extraordinary linguist, the "learned blacksmith," who ought to have been a teacher of languages; and you may have seen lawyers, doctors and clergymen who were better fitted by nature for the anvil or the lapstone.

**SELECT THE RIGHT LOCATION.**—After securing the right vocation, you must be careful to select the proper location. You may have been cut out for a hotel-keeper, and they say it requires a genius to "know how to keep a hotel." You might conduct a hotel like clock-work, and provide satisfactorily for five hundred guests every day; yet, if you should locate your house in a small village where there is no railroad communication or public travel, the location would be your



ruin. It is equally important that you do not commence business where there are already enough to meet all demands in the same occupation.

AVOID DEBT.—Young men starting in life should avoid running into debt. There is scarcely anything that drags a person down like debt. It is a slavish position to get in. Debt robs a man of his self-respect, and makes him almost despise himself. I do not speak of merchants buying and selling on credit, or of those who buy on credit in order to turn the purchase to a profit. The old Quaker said to his farmer son: "John, never get trusted; but if thee gets trusted for anything let it be for 'manure,' because that will help thee pay it back again." Some families have a foolish habit of getting credit at "the stores," and thus frequently purchase many things which might have been dispensed with.

John Randolph, the eccentric Virginian, once exclaimed in Congress: "Mr. Speaker, I have discovered the philosopher's stone: pay as you go." This is, indeed, nearer to the philosopher's stone than any alchemist has ever yet arrived.

PERSEVERE.—When a man is in the right path, he must persevere. Continue in that path for ten or twenty years—always living within your income, putting your surplus at interest, and necessarily adding to your experience, and *your independence is secured beyond all peradventure*. Remember the proverb of Solomon: "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand; but the hand of the diligent maketh rich."

Perseverance is sometimes but another word for self-reliance. Many persons naturally look on the dark side of life, and borrow trouble. They are born so. They ask for advice, and they will be governed by one wind and blown by another. Until you can get so that you can rely upon yourself, you need not expect to succeed. I have known men, personally, who have met with pecuniary reverses, and absolutely committed suicide, because they thought they could never overcome their misfortune. But I have known others who have met more serious financial difficulties, and have bridged them over by simple perseverance, aided by a firm belief that they were doing justly, and that Providence would "overcome evil with good."



"Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well." Many a man acquires a fortune by doing his business thoroughly, while his neighbour remains poor for life, because he only half does it. Ambition, energy, industry, perseverance, are indispensable requisites for success in business.

Fortune always favours the brave, and never helps a man who does not help himself. It won't do to spend your time like Mr. Micawber, in waiting for something to "turn up." To such men one of two things usually "turns up"—the poor-house or the jail; for idleness breeds bad habits, and clothes a man in rags.

Cromwell said to his soldiers: "Trust in Providence, and keep your powder dry." Do your part of the work, or you cannot succeed. Mahomet, one night, while encamping in the desert, overheard one of his fatigued followers remark: "I will loose my camel, and trust it to God." "No, no, not so," said the prophet, "tie thy camel, and trust it to God!" Do all you can for yourselves, and then trust to Providence.

DEPEND UPON YOUR OWN PERSONAL EXERTIONS.—The eye of the employer is often worth more than the hands of a dozen employes.

No man can understand his business thoroughly unless he learns it by personal application and experience. A man may be a manufacturer; he has got to learn the many details of his business personally; he will learn something every day, and he will make mistakes nearly every day. And these very mistakes are helps to him in the way of experiences, if he but heeds them.

Among the maxims of the elder Rothschild was one, an apparent paradox: "Be cautious and bold." This seems to be a contradiction in terms, but it is not, and there is great wisdom in the maxim. It is, in fact, a condensed statement of what I have already said. It is to say, "You must exercise your caution in laying your plans, but be bold in carrying them out." A man who is all caution will never dare to take hold and be successful; and a man who is all boldness is merely reckless, and must eventually fail;

The Rothschilds have another maxim: "Never have anything to do with an unlucky man or place." That is to say



Néver have anything to do with a man or place which never succeeds, because, although a man may appear to be honest and intelligent, yet if he tries this or that thing and always fails, it is on account of some fault or infirmity that you may not be able to discover, but nevertheless which exists.

There is no such thing in the world as luck.

"Like causes produce like effects." If a man adopts the proper methods to be successful, "luck" will not prevent him. If he does not succeed, there are reasons for it, although, perhaps, he may not be able to see them.

USE THE BEST TOOLS.—Men in engaging employés should be careful to get *the best*. Understand, you cannot have too good tools to work with, and there is no tool you should be so particular about as living tools. If you get a good one, keep him. He learns something every day,<sup>2</sup> and you are benefited by the experience he acquires. He is worth more to you this year than last, and he is the last man to part with, provided his habits are good, and he continues faithful. If, as he gets more valuable, he demands an exorbitant increase of salary, on the supposition that you can't do without him, let him go: Whenever I have such an employé, I always discharge him; first, to convince him that his place may be supplied; and, second, because he is good for nothing if he thinks he cannot be spared.

But I would keep him, if possible, in order to profit from the result of his experience. An important element in an employé is the brain.

There is no greater mistake than when a young man believes he will succeed with borrowed money. Why? Because every man's experience coincides with that of Mr. Astor, who said, "It was more difficult for him to accumulate his first thousand dollars, than all the succeeding millions that made up his colossal fortune." Money is good for nothing unless you know the value of it by experience. Give a boy twenty thousand dollars and put him in business, and the chances are that he will lose every dollar of it before he is a year older. Like buying a ticket in the lottery, and drawing a prize, it is "Easy come, easy go." He does not know the value of it; nothing is worth anything, unless it costs effort.



Without self-denial and economy, patience and perseverance, and commencing with capital which you have not earned, you are not sure to succeed in accumulating. Nine out of ten of the rich men of our country to-day, started out in life as poor boys, with determined wills, industry, perseverance, economy and good habits. They went on gradually, made their own money and saved it; and this is the best way to acquire a fortune. Stephen Girard started life as a poor cabin-boy, and died worth nine million dollars. A. T. Stewart was a poor Irish boy, and died worth many millions. John Jacob Astor was a poor farmer boy, and died worth twenty millions. Cornelius Vanderbilt began life rowing a boat from Staten Island to New York. He left about a hundred million dollars at his decease.

Young men loaded down with other people's money are almost sure to lose all they inherit, and they acquire all sorts of bad habits which, in the majority of cases, ruin them in health, purse and character. In this country one generation follows another, and the poor of to-day are rich in the next generation, or the third. Their experience leads them on, and they become rich, and they leave vast riches to their young children. These children having been reared in luxury, are inexperienced and get poor; and after long experience another generation comes on and gathers up riches again in turn. And thus "History repeats itself," and happy is he who, by listening to the experience of others, avoids the rocks and shoals on which so many have been wrecked.

Every "legitimate" business is a double blessing—it helps the man engaged in it, and also helps others. The farmer supports his own family, but he also benefits the merchant or mechanic who needs the products of his farm. The tailor not only makes a living by his trade, but he also benefits the farmer, the clergyman, and others who cannot make their own clothing. But all these classes of men may be "gentlemen."

The great ambition should be to *excel* all others engaged in the same occupation.

The college-student, who was about graduating, said to Daniel Webster:



"I have not yet decided which profession I will follow. Is the profession of law full?"

"The basement is much crowded, but there is plenty of room *upstairs*," was the witty and truthful reply.

No profession, trade, or calling, is overcrowded in the upper storey. Wherever you find the most honest and intelligent merchant or banker, or the best lawyer, the best doctor, the best clergyman, the best shoemaker, carpenter, or anything else, that man is most sought for, and has always enough to do. As a nation, Americans are too superficial—they are striving to get rich quickly, and do not generally do their business as substantially and thoroughly as they should, but whoever *excels* all others in his own line, if his habits are good and his integrity undoubted, cannot fail to secure abundant patronage and the wealth that naturally follows. Let your motto then always be "Excelsior," for by living up to it there is no such word as fail.

LEARN SOMETHING USEFUL.—Every man should make his son or daughter learn some trade or profession, so that in these days of changing fortunes—of being rich to-day and poor to-morrow—they may have something tangible to fall back upon. This provision might save many persons from misery, who by some unexpected turn of fortune have lost all their means.

LET HOPE PREDOMINATE, BUT BE NOT TOO VISIONARY.—Many persons are always kept poor, because they are too visionary. Every project looks to them like certain success, and therefore they keep changing from one business to another, always in hot water, always "under the harrow." The plan of "counting the chickens before they are hatched" is an error of ancient date, but it does not seem to improve by age.

DO NOT SCATTER YOUR POWERS.—Engage in one kind of business only, and stick to it faithfully until you succeed, or until your experience shows that you should abandon it. A constant hammering on one nail will generally drive it home at last, so that it can be clinched. When a man's undivided attention is centred on one object, his mind will constantly be suggesting improvements of value, which would escape him if his brain was occupied by a dozen different subjects at



once. Many a fortune has slipped through a man's fingers because he was engaged in too many occupations at a time. There is good sense in the old caution against having too many irons in the fire at once.

**BE SYSTEMATIC.**—Men should be systematic in their business. A person who does business by rule, having a time and place for everything, doing his work promptly, will accomplish twice as much and with half the trouble of him who does it carelessly and slipshod. By introducing system into all your transactions, doing one thing at a time, always meeting appointments with punctuality, you find leisure for pastime and recreation; whereas the man who only half does one thing, and then turns to something else, and half does that, will have his business at loose ends, and will never know when his day's work is done, for it never will be done.

**READ THE NEWSPAPERS.**—Always take a trustworthy newspaper, and thus keep thoroughly posted in regard to the transactions of the world. He who is without a newspaper is cut off from his species. In these days of telegraphs and steam, many important inventions and improvements in every branch of trade, are being made, and he who does not consult the newspapers will soon find himself and his business left out in the cold.

**BEWARE OF "OUTSIDE OPERATIONS."**—We sometimes see men who have obtained fortunes, suddenly become poor. In many cases, this arises from intemperance, and often from gaming, and other bad habits. Frequently it occurs because a man has been engaged in "outside operations," of some sort. When he gets rich in his legitimate business, he is told of a grand speculation where he can make a score of thousands. He is constantly flattered by his friends, who tell him that he is born lucky, that everything he touches turns into gold. Now, if he forgets that his economical habits, his rectitude of conduct and a personal attention to a business which he understood, caused his success in life, he will listen to the siren voices, and fail.

If a man has plenty of money, he ought to invest something in everything that appears to promise success, and that will probably benefit mankind; but let the sums thus invested be



moderate in amount, and never let a man foolishly jeopardize a fortune that he has earned in a legitimate way, by investing it in things in which he has had no experience.

DON'T INDORSE WITHOUT SECURITY.—I hold that no man ought ever to indorse a note or become security for any man, be it his father or brother, to a greater extent than he can afford to lose and care nothing about, without taking good security.

Let a young man starting in business understand the value of money by earning it. When he does understand its value, then grease the wheels a little in helping him to start business, but remember, men who get money with too great facility, cannot usually succeed. You must get the first dollars by hard knocks, and at some sacrifice, in order to appreciate the value of those dollars.

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS.—We all depend, more or less, upon the public for our support. We all trade with the public—lawyers, doctors, shoemakers, artists, blacksmiths, showmen, opera-singers, railroad presidents, and college professors. Those who deal with the public must be careful that their goods are valuable; that they are genuine, and will give satisfaction.

If a man has a *genuine* article he should advertise it.

Anything *spurious* will not succeed permanently, because the public is wiser than many imagine. Men and women are selfish, and we all prefer purchasing where we can get the most for our money.

A man who advertises at all must keep it up until the public know who and what he is, and what his business is.

BE CHARITABLE.—We should be charitable, because it is a duty and a pleasure. But even as a matter of policy, if you possess no higher incentive, you will find that the liberal man will command patronage, while the sordid, uncharitable miser will be avoided.

Solomon says: "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." The only true charity is that which is from the heart.

The best kind of charity is to help those who are willing to



help themselves. Promiscuous almsgiving, without inquiring into the worthiness of the applicant, is bad in every sense. But to search out and quietly assist those who are struggling for themselves, is the kind that "scattereth, and yet increaseth." But don't give a prayer instead of a potato, and a benediction instead of bread to the hungry. It is easier to make Christians with full stomachs than empty.

**DON'T BLAB.**—Some men have a foolish habit of telling their business secrets. If they make money they like to tell their neighbours how it was done. Nothing is gained by this, and oft-times much is lost. Say nothing about your profits, your hopes, your expectations, your intentions.---And this should apply to letters as well as to conversation. Goethe makes Mephistopheles say: "Never write a letter nor destroy one." Business men must write letters, but they should be careful what they put in them. If you are losing money, be specially cautious and not tell of it, or you will lose your credit.

**PRESERVE YOUR INTEGRITY.**—It is more precious than diamonds or rubies. The old miser said to his sons: "Get money; get it honestly, if you can, but get money." This advice was not only atrociously wicked, but it was the very essence of stupidity. It was as much as to say: "If you find it difficult to obtain money honestly, you can easily get it dishonestly. Get it in that way." Poor fool! Not to know that the most difficult thing in life is to make money dishonestly; not to know that our prisons are full of men who attempted to follow this advice; not to understand that no man can be dishonest, without soon being found out, and that when his lack of principle is discovered, nearly every avenue to success is closed against him for ever. The inordinate love of money, no doubt, may be and is "the root of all evil," but money itself, when properly used, is not only a "handy thing to have in the house," but affords the gratification of blessing our race by enabling its possessor to enlarge the scope of human happiness and human influence. The desire for wealth is nearly universal, and none can say it is not laudable, provided the possessor of it accepts its responsibilities, and uses it as a friend to humanity.



The history of money-getting, which is Commerce, is a history of civilisation, and wherever trade has flourished most, there, too, have art and science produced the noblest fruits. In fact, as a general thing, money-getters are the benefactors of our race. To them, in a great measure, are we indebted for our institutions of learning and of art, our academies, colleges and churches. It is no argument against the desire for, or the possession of, wealth, to say that there are sometimes misers who hoard money only for the sake of hoarding, and who have no higher aspiration than to grasp everything which comes within their reach. As we have sometimes hypocrites in religion, and demagogues in politics, so there are occasionally misers among money-getters. These, however, are only exceptions to the general rule. But when, in this country, we find such a nuisance and stumbling-block as a miser, we remember with gratitude that in America we have no laws of primogeniture, and that in the due course of nature the time will come when the hoarded dust will be scattered for the benefit of mankind. To all men and women, therefore, do I conscientiously say, make money honestly (and not otherwise); for Shakespeare has truly said: "He that wants money, means and content, is without three good friends."

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During the year 1859, I delivered the lecture (of which the foregoing is only an abridgment) nearly one hundred times in different parts of England, returning occasionally to London to repeat it to fresh audiences, and always with pecuniary success. Every provincial paper had something to say about Barnum and "The Art of Money-Getting," and I was never more pleasantly or profusely advertised. The tour, too, made me acquainted with many new people, and added fresh and fast friends to my continually increasing list. My lecturing season is among my most grateful memories of England.

Remembering my experiences, some years before, with General Tom Thumb at Oxford and Cambridge, and the fondness of the undergraduates for practical joking, I was quite prepared, when I made up my mind to visit those two cities, to take any quantity of "chaff" and lampooning which



the University boys might choose to bring. I was sure of a full house in each city, and as I was anxious to earn all the money I could, so as to hasten my deliverance from financial difficulties, I fully resolved to put up with whatever offered—indeed, I rather liked the idea of an episode in the steady run of praise which had followed my lecture everywhere, and I felt too, in the coming encounter, that I might give quite as much as I was compelled to take.

I commenced at Cambridge, and, as I expected, to an overflowing house, largely composed of undergraduates. Soon after I began to speak, one of the young men called out: "Where is Joice Heth?" to which I very coolly replied:

"Young gentleman, please to restrain yourself till the conclusion of the lecture, when I shall take great delight in affording you, or any others of her posterity, all the information I possess concerning your deceased relative."

This reply turned the laugh against the youthful and anxious inquirer, and had the effect of keeping other students quiet for half an hour. Thereafter, questions of a similar character were occasionally propounded, but as each inquirer generally received a prompt Roland for his Oliver, there was far less interruption than I had anticipated. The proceeds of the evening were more than one hundred pounds sterling, an important addition to my treasury at that time. At the close of the lecture, several students invited me to a sumptuous supper.

At Oxford, the large hall was filled half an hour before the time announced for the lecture to begin, and the sale of tickets was stopped. I then stepped upon the platform, and said: "Ladies and gentlemen,—As every seat is occupied and the ticket-office is closed, I propose to proceed with my lecture now, and not keep you waiting till the advertised hour."

"Good for you, old Barnum," said one. "Time is money," said another. "Nothing like economy," came from a third, and other remarks and exclamations followed, which excited much laughter in the audience. Holding up my hand as a signal that I was anxious to say something as soon as silence should be restored, I thus addressed my audience:

"Young gentlemen, I have a word or two to say, in order



that we may have a thorough understanding between ourselves at the outset. I see symptoms of a pretty jolly time here this evening, and you have paid me liberally for the single hour of my time which is at your service. I am an old traveller and an old showman, and I like to please my patrons. Now, it is quite immaterial to me; you may furnish the entertainment for the hour, or I will endeavour to do so, or we will take portions of the time by turns—you supplying a part of the amusement, and I a part. As we say sometimes in America, "you pays your money, and you takes your choice."

My auditors were in the best of humour from the beginning and my frankness pleased them. "Good for you, old Barnum," cried the leader; and I went on with my lecture for some fifteen minutes when a voice called out:

"Come, old chap! you must be tired by this time; hold up now till we sing 'Yankee Doodle,'" whereupon they all joined in that pleasing air with a vigour which showed that they had thoroughly prepared themselves for the occasion, and meanwhile I took a chair and sat down to show them that I was quite satisfied with their manner of passing the time. When the song was concluded, the leader of the party said: "Now, Mr. Barnum, you may go ahead again."

I looked at my watch and quietly remarked, "Oh! there is time for lots of fun yet; we have nearly forty minutes of the hour remaining," and I proceeded with my lecture, or rather a lecture, for I began to adapt my remarks to the audience and the occasion. At intervals of ten minutes, or so, came interruptions which I, as my audience saw, fully enjoyed as much as the house did. When this miscellaneous entertainment was concluded, and I stopped short at the end of the hour, crowds of the young men pressed forward to shake hands with me, declaring that they had had a "jolly good time," while the leader said: "Stay with us a week, Barnum, and we will dine you, wine you, and give you full houses every night." But I was announced to lecture in London the next evening, and I could not accept the pressing invitation, though I would gladly have stayed through the week. They asked me all sorts of questions about America, the Museum,



my various shows and successes, and expressed the hope that I would come out of my clock troubles all right.

At least a score of them pressed me to breakfast with them next morning, but I declined, till one young gentleman put it on this purely personal ground :

“ My dear sir, you must breakfast with me ; I have almost split my throat in screaming here to-night, and it is only fair that you should repay me by coming to see me in the morning.” This appeal was irresistible, and at the appointed time, I met him and half a dozen of his friends at his table, and we spent a very pleasant hour together. They complimented me on the tact and equanimity I had exhibited the previous evening, but I replied : “ Oh, I was quite inclined to have you enjoy your fun and came fully prepared for it.”

But they liked better, they said, to get the party angry. A fortnight before, they told me, my friend, Howard Paul, had left them in disgust, because they insisted upon smoking while his wife was on the stage, adding that the entertainment was excellent, and that Howard Paul could have made a thousand pounds if he had not let his anger drive him away. My new-found friends parted with me at the railway station, heartily urging me to come again, and my ticket-seller returned £169 as the immediate result of an evening's good-natured fun with the Oxford boys.

After delivering my lecture many times in different places, a prominent publishing house in London offered me £1,200 (\$6,000) for the copyright. This offer I declined, not that I thought the lecture worth more money, but because I had engaged to deliver it in several towns and cities, and I thought the publication would be detrimental to the public delivery of my lecture. It was a source of very considerable emolument to me, bringing in much money, which went towards the redemption of my pecuniary obligations, so that the lecture itself was an admirable illustration of “ The Art of Money-Getting.”

I delivered this lecture in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester. The next day a gentleman, named John Fish, sent his card to my room at the hotel where I was stopping. I requested the servant to show him up at once, and he soon appeared and



introduced himself. At first he seemed somewhat embarrassed, but gradually broke the ice by saying he had been pleased in listening to my lecture the previous evening, and added that he knew my history pretty well, as he had read my autobiography. As his embarrassment at first meeting with a stranger wore away, he informed me that he was joint proprietor with another gentleman in a "cotton mill" in Bury, near Manchester, "although," he modestly added, "only a few years ago I was working as a journeyman, and probably should have been at this time, had it not been for your book." Observing my surprise at this announcement, he continued:

"The fact is, Mr. Barnum, upon reading your autobiography, I thought I perceived you tried to make yourself out something worse than you really were; for I discovered a pleasant spirit and a good heart under the rougher exterior in which you chose to present yourself to the public; but," he added, "after reading your life, I found myself in possession of renewed strength, and awakened energies and aspirations, and I said to myself: 'Why can't I go ahead and make money as Barnum did? He commenced without money, and succeeded; why may not I?' In this train of thought," he continued, "I went to a newspaper office, and advertised for a partner with money to join me in establishing a cotton-mill. I had no applications, and, remembering your experiences when you had money and wanted a partner, I spent half a crown in a similar experiment. I advertised for a partner to join a man who had plenty of capital. Then I had lots of applicants ready to introduce me into all sorts of occupations, from that of a banker to that of a horse-jockey or gambler, if I would only furnish the money to start with. After awhile I advertised again for a partner, and obtained one with money. We have a good mill. I devote myself closely to business, and have been very successful. I know every line in your book; so, indeed, do several members of my family; and I have conducted my business on the principles laid down in your published 'Rules for Money-Making.' I find them correct principles: and, sir, I have sought this interview in order to thank you for publishing your autobiography, and



to tell you that to that act of yours I attribute my present position in life."

Of course, I was pleased and surprised at this revelation, and, feeling that my new friend had somewhat exaggerated the results of my labours as influencing his own, I said:

"Your statement is certainly very flattering, and I am glad if I have been able in any manner, through my experiences, to aid you in starting in life; but I presume your genius would have found vent in good time if I had never written a book."

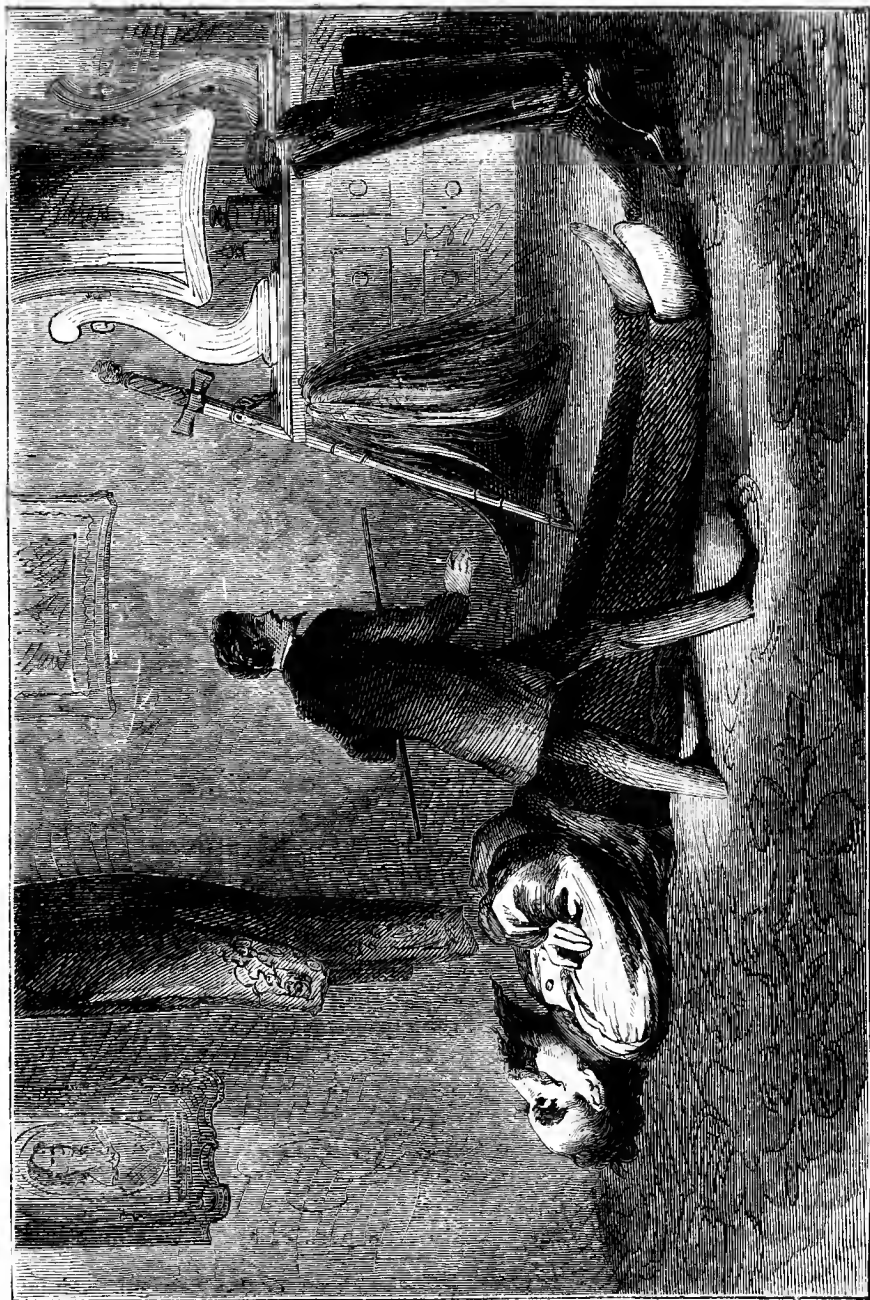
"No, indeed it would not," he replied, in an earnest tone; "I am sure I should have worked as a mill-hand all my life if it had not been for you. Oh, I have made no secret of it," he continued; "the commercial men with whom I deal know all about it; indeed, they call me 'Barnum' on 'Change here in Manchester."

On one occasion, when General Tom Thumb exhibited in Bury, Mr. Fish closed his mill and gave each of his employés a ticket to the exhibition, out of respect, as he said to Mr. Barnum. On a subsequent occasion, when the little General visited England the last time, Mr. Fish invited him, his wife, Commodore Nutt, Minnie Warren, and the managers of "the show," to a splendid and sumptuous dinner at his house, which the distinguished little party enjoyed exceedingly.

My friend Fish expressed himself extremely anxious to do any service for me which might at any time be in his power. Soon after I arrived in America, I read an account of a French giant, then exhibiting in Paris, and said to be over eight feet in height. As this was a considerably greater altitude than any specimen of the *genus homo* within my knowledge had attained, I wrote to my friend Fish to take a trip to Paris for me, secure an interview with this modern Anak, and by actual measurement obtain for me his exact height. I enclosed an offer for this giant's services, arranging the price on a sliding scale, according to what his height should actually prove to be—commencing at eight feet, and descending to seven feet two inches; and if he was not taller than the latter figure, I did not want him at all.

Mr. Fish, placing an English two-foot rule in his pocket, started for Paris; and, after much difficulty, and several





"THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT."



days' delay in trying to speak with the giant, who was closely watched by his exhibitor, succeeded in appointing an interview at the giant's lodgings. And now came a trouble which required all the patience and diplomacy which my agent could command. Mr. Fish, arriving at the place of rendezvous, told the giant who he was, and the object of his visit. In fact, he showed him my letter, and read the tempting offers which I made for his services, provided he measured eight feet, or even came within six inches of that height.

"Oh, I measure over eight feet in height," said the giant. "Very likely," replied my faithful agent; "but you see my orders are to measure you." "There's no need of that; you can see for yourself," stretching himself up a few inches, by aid of that peculiar muscular knack which giants and dwarfs exercise when they desire to extend or diminish their apparent stature.

"No doubt you are right," persisted the agent, "but you see that is not according to orders." "Well, stand alongside of me; see, the top of your hat don't come to my shoulder," said the giant, as he swung his arm completely over Mr. Fish's head, hat and all.

But my wary agent happened just then to be watching the giant's feet and knees, and he thought he saw a movement around the "understandings" that materially helped the elevation of the "upper-works." "It is all very well," said Mr. Fish; "but I tell you, if I am not permitted to measure your height, I shall not engage you." My offer had been very liberal; in fact, provided he was eight feet high, it was more than four times the amount the giant was then receiving; it was evidently a great temptation to his "highness," and quite as evidently he did not want to be fairly measured. "Well," said the giant, "if you can't take my word for it, look at that door: you see my head is more than two feet above the top," giving his neck and every muscle in his body a severe stretch; "just measure the height of that door." My English friend plainly saw that the giant felt that he could not come up to the mark, and he laughed at this last ruse. "Oh, I don't want to measure the door; I prefer to measure you," said Mr. Fish, coolly. The giant was now desperate, and stretching



himself up to the highest point, he exclaimed: "Well, be quick! put your rule down to my feet and measure me; no delay, if you please."

The giant knew he could not hold himself up many seconds to the few extra inches he had imparted to his extended muscles; but his remark had drawn Mr. Fish's attention to his feet, and from the feet to the boots, and he began to open his eyes. "Look here, Monsieur," he exclaimed with much earnestness, "this sort of thing won't do, you know. I don't understand this contrivance around the soles of your boots, but it seems to me you have got a set of springs in there which materially aids your altitude a few inches when you desire it. Now, I shall stand no more nonsense. If I engage you at all, you must first take off your boots, and lie flat upon your back in the middle of the floor." The giant grumbled and talked about his word being doubted and his honour assailed, but Mr. Fish calmly persisted, until at length he slowly took off his coat and gradually got down on the floor. Stretched upon his back, he made several vain efforts to extend his natural height. Mr. Fish carefully applied his English two-foot rule, the result of the measurement causing him much astonishment, and the giant more indignation, the giant measuring exactly seven feet one and one-half inches. So he was not engaged, and my agent returned to England and wrote me a most amusing letter, giving the particulars of the gigantic interview.

On the occasion of the erection of a new engine in his mill, Mr. Fish proposed naming it after his daughter, but she insisted it should be christened "Barnum," and it was so done, with considerable ceremony. Subsequently he introduced a second engine into his enlarged mill, and named this, after my wife, "Charity."

A short time since, I wrote informing him that I desired to give some of the foregoing facts in my book, and asked him to give me his consent, and also to furnish me some particulars in regard to the engines, and the capacity of his mill. He wrote in return a modest letter, which is so characteristic of my whole-souled friend, that I cannot forbear making the following extracts from it :



" Had I made a fortune of £100,000 I should have been proud of a place in your 'Autobiography;' but as I have only been able to make (here he named a sum which in this country would be considered almost a fortune), I feel I should be out of place in your pages; at all events, if you mention me at all, draw it mildly, if you please.

" The American war has made sad havoc in our trade, and it is only by close attention to business that I have lately been at all successful. I have built a place for one thousand looms, and have, as you know, put in a pair of engines, which I have named "Barnum" and "Charity." Each engine has its name engraved on two large brass plates at either end of the cylinder, which has often caused much mirth when I have explained the circumstances to visitors. I started and christened "Charity" on the fourteenth of January last, and she has saved me £12 per month in coals ever since. The steam from the boiler goes first to "Charity" (she is high pressure), and "Barnum" only gets the steam after she has done with it. He has to work at low pressure (a condensing engine), and the result is a saving. "Barnum" was extravagant when he took steam direct, but since I fixed "Charity" betwixt him and the boiler, he can only get what she gives him. This reminds me that you state in your 'Life' you could always make money, but formerly did not save it. Perhaps you never took care of it till 'Charity' became Chancellor of Exchequer."





## CHAPTER XXVII.

## RICHARD'S HIMSELF AGAIN.

At last, in March, 1860, all the clock indebtedness was satisfactorily extinguished, excepting some \$20,000, which I had bound myself to take up within a certain number of months.

On the seventeenth day of March, 1860, Messrs. Butler and Greenwood signed an agreement to sell and deliver to me on the following Saturday March 24th, their goodwill and entire interest in the Museum collection. This fact was thoroughly circulated, and it was everywhere announced in blazing posters, placards and advertisements, which were headed, "Barnum on his feet again." It was furthermore stated that the Museum would be closed on March 24th for repairs and general renovation, to be re-opened on March 31st, under the management and proprietorship of its original owner. It was also announced that on the night of closing, I would address the audience from the stage.

The American Museum, decorated on that occasion as on holidays, with a brilliant display of flags and banners, was filled to its utmost capacity.

At the rising of the curtain, and before the play commenced, I stepped on the stage and was received by the large and brilliant audience with an enthusiasm far surpassing anything of the kind I had ever experienced or witnessed in a public career of a quarter of a century. Indeed, this tremendous demonstration nearly broke me down, and my voice faltered and tears came to my eyes as I thought of this magnificent conclusion to the trials and struggles of the past four years. Recovering myself, however, I bowed my grateful acknowledgments for the reception, and addressed the audience in an off-hand speech, which was received with almost tumultuous applause. At nearly fifty years of age, I was now once more before the public with the promise to put on a full head of steam, to "rush things," to give double or treble the



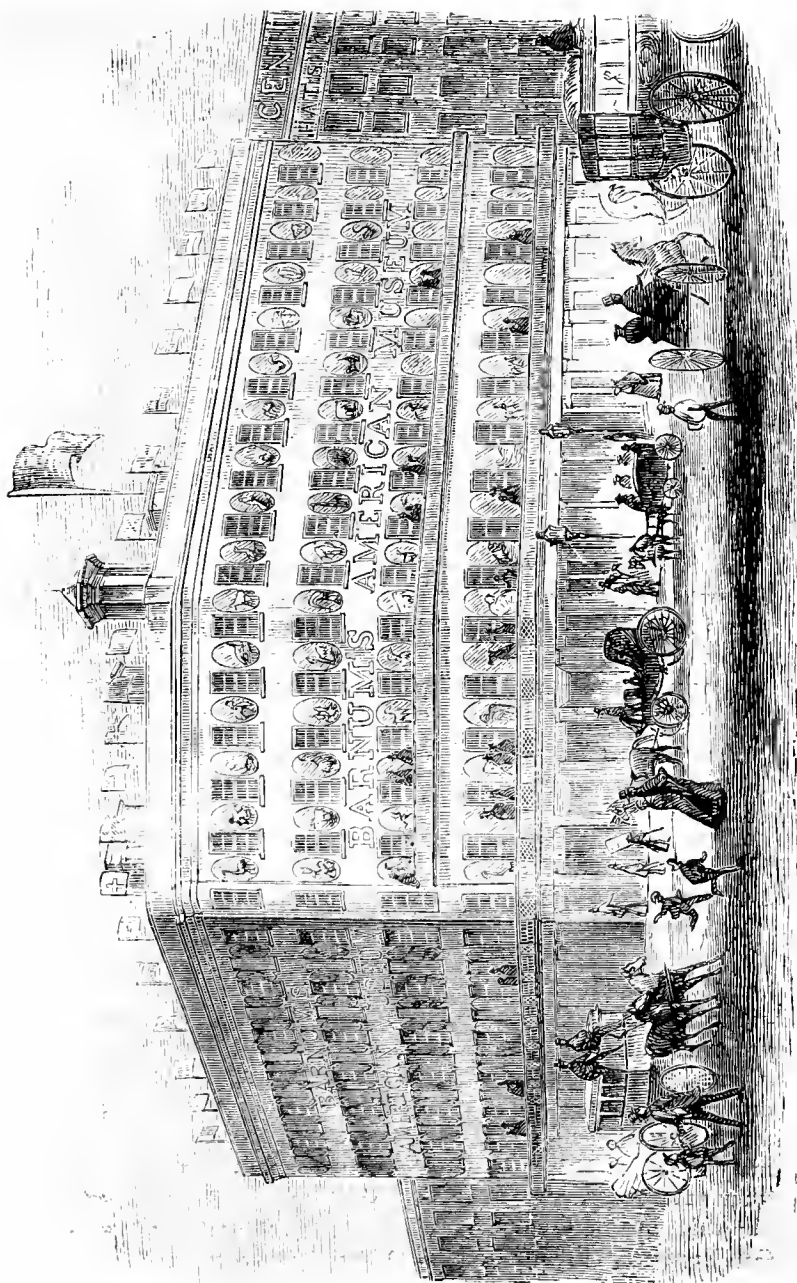
amount of attraction ever before offered at the Museum, and to devote all my own time and services to the enterprise. In return, I asked that the public should give my efforts the patronage they merited, and the public took me at my word. The daily number of visitors at once more than doubled, and my exertions to gratify them with rapid changes and novelties never tired.

The announcement that I was at last out of the financial entanglement was variously received. That portion of the press which had followed me with abuse when I was down, under the belief that my case was past recovery, were chary in allusions to the new state of things, or passed them over without comment. The sycophants always knew I would get up again, "and said so at the time;" the many and noble journals which had stood by me and upheld me in my misfortunes, were of course rejoiced, and their words of sincere congratulation gave me a higher satisfaction than I have power of language to acknowledge. Letters of congratulation came in upon me from every quarter. Friendly hands that had never been withheld during the long period of my misfortune, were now extended with a still heartier grip. I never knew till now the warmth and number of my friends.

Nor must I neglect to state that a large number of my creditors who held the clock notes, proved very magnanimous in taking into consideration the gross deception which had put me in their power. Not a few of them said to me in substance: "You never supposed you had made yourself liable for this debt; you were deluded into it; it is not right that it should be held over you to keep you hopelessly down; take it, and pay me such percentage as, under the circumstances, it is possible for you to pay." But for such men and such consideration, I fear I should never have got on my feet again; and of the many who rejoiced in my bettered fortune, not a few were of this class of my creditors.

My old friend, the *Boston Saturday Evening Gazette*, which printed a few cheering poetical lines of consolation and hope when I was down, now gave me the following from the same graceful pen, conveying glowing words of congratulation at my rise again:





THE MUSEUM BUILDING.



## ANOTHER WORD FOR BARNUM.

BARNUM, your hand! The struggle o'er,  
You face the world and ask no favour;  
You stand where you have stood before,  
The old salt hasn't lost its savour.  
You now can laugh with friends, at foes,  
Ne'er heeding Mrs. Grundy's tattle;  
You've dealt and taken sturdy blows,  
Regardless of the rabble prattle.

Not yours the heart to harbour ill  
'Gainst those who've dealt in trivial jesting;  
You pass them with the same goodwill  
Erst shown when they their wit were testing.  
You're the same Barnum that we knew,  
You're good for years, still fit for labour;  
Be as of old, be bold and true,  
Honest as man, as friend, as neighbour.

I was now fairly embarked on board the good old ship American Museum, to try once more my skill as captain, and to see what fortune the voyage would bring me. Curiosities began to pour into the Museum Halls, and I was eager for enterprises in the show line, whether as part of the Museum itself, or as outside accessories or accompaniments. Among the first to give me a call, with attractions sure to prove a success, was James C. Adams, of hard-earned, grizzly-bear fame. This extraordinary man was eminently what is called "a character." He was universally known as "Grizzly Adams," from the fact that he had captured a great many grizzly bears, at the risk and cost of fearful encounters and perils. He was brave, and with his bravery there was enough of the romantic in his nature to make him a real hero. For many years a hunter and trapper in the Rocky and Sierra Nevada Mountains, he acquired a recklessness which, added to his natural invincible courage, rendered him one of the most striking men of the age, and he was emphatically a man of pluck. A month after I had re-purchased the Museum, he arrived in New York with his famous collection of California animals, captured by himself, consisting of twenty or thirty immense grizzly bears, at the head of which stood "Old Samson," together with several wolves, half a dozen different species of California bears, California lions, tigers, buffalo, elk, and "Old Neptune," the great sea-lion from the Pacific.



Old Adams had trained all these monsters so that with him they were as docile as kittens, though many of the most ferocious among them would attack a stranger without hesitation, if he came within their grasp. In fact, the training of these animals was no fool's play, as Old Adams learned to his cost, for the terrific blows which he received from time to time, while teaching them "docility," finally cost him his life.

Adams called on me immediately on his arrival in New York. He was dressed in his hunter's suit of buckskin, trimmed with the skins and bordered with the hanging tails of small Rocky Mountain animals; his cap consisting of the skin of a wolf's head and shoulders, from which depended several tails, and under which appeared his stiff, bushy, grey hair, and his long, white, grizzly beard; in fact, Old Adams was quite as much of a show as his beasts. They had come around Cape Horn on the clipper ship *Golden Fleece*, and a sea voyage of three and a half months had probably not added much to the beauty or neat appearance of the old bear-hunter. During our conversation, Grizzly Adams took off his cap, and showed me the top of his head. His skull was literally broken in. It had, on various occasions, been struck by the fearful paws of his grizzly students; and the last blow, from the bear called "General Fremont," had laid open his brain so that its workings were plainly visible. I remarked that I thought it was a dangerous wound, and might possibly prove fatal.

Soon after Grizzly Adams' departure, an old German called on me inquiring if I did not wish to purchase some golden pigeons.

"Yes," I replied, "I would like a flock of golden pigeons if I could buy them for their weight in silver; for there are no 'golden pigeons in existence, unless they are made from the pure metal."

"You shall see some golden pigeons alive," he replied, at the same time entering my office, and closing the door after him. He then removed the lid from a small basket which he carried in his hand, and sure enough there were snugly ensconced a pair of beautiful, living ruff-necked pigeons, as



yellow as saffron, and as bright as a double-eagle fresh from the mint.

I confess I was somewhat staggered at this sight, and quickly asked the man where those birds came from. A dull, lazy smile crawled over the sober face of my German visitor, as he replied in a slow, guttural tone of voice:

"What you think yourself?"

Catching his meaning, I quickly replied:

"I think it is a humbug."

"Of course, I know you will say so; because you 'forstha' such things; so I shall not try to humbug you; I have coloured them myself."

On further inquiry, I learned that this German was a chemist, and that he possessed the art of colouring birds any hue desired, and yet retain a natural gloss on the feathers, which gave every shade the appearance of reality.

Thinking here was a good chance to catch "Grizzly Adams," I bought the pair of golden pigeons for ten dollars, and sent them up to the "Happy Family" (where I knew Adams would soon see them), marked, "Golden Pigeons, from California."

The next morning "Old Grizzly Adams" passed through the Museum, when his eyes fell on the "Golden California Pigeons." He looked a moment, and doubtless admired. He soon after came to my office.

"Mr. Barnum," said he, "you must let me have those California pigeons."

"I can't spare them," I replied.

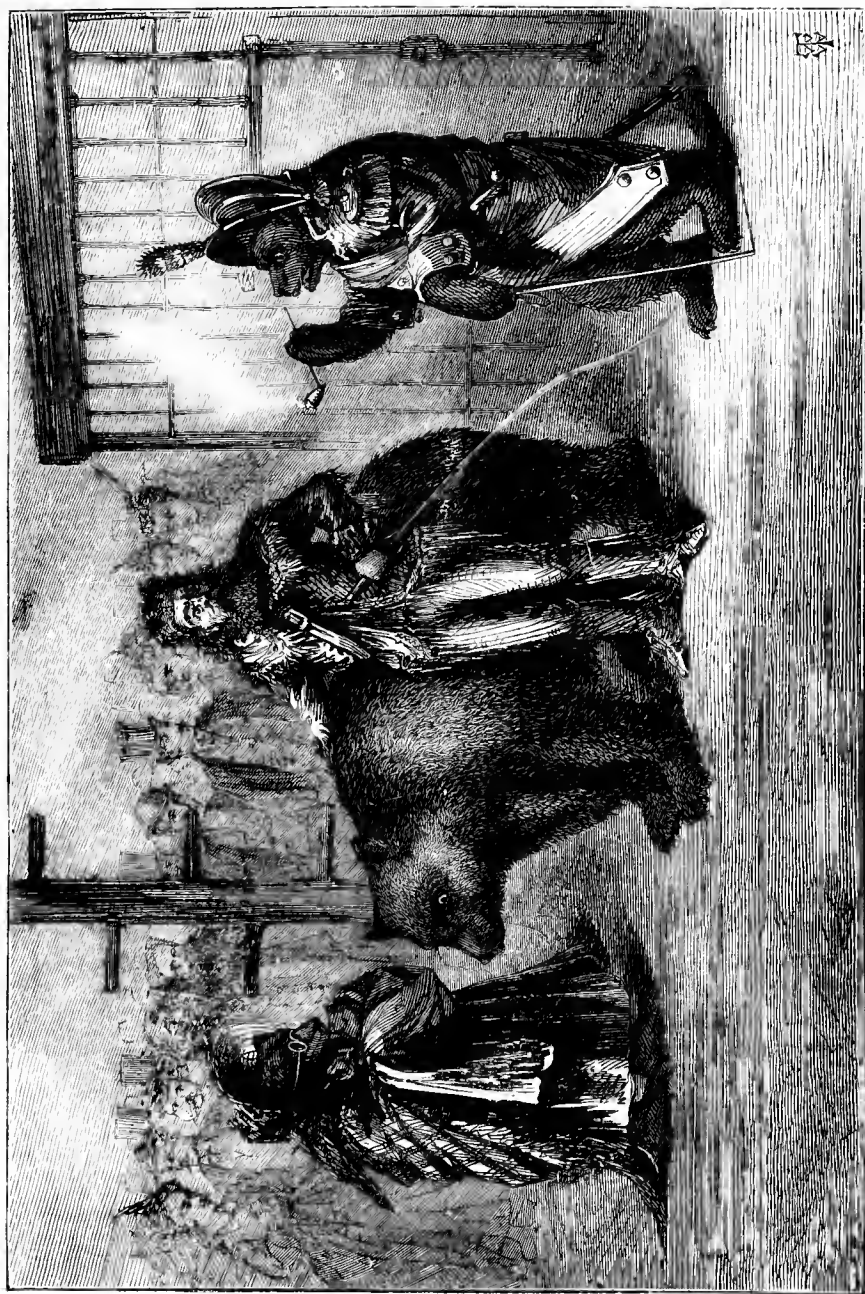
"But you must spare them. All the birds and animals from California ought to be together. You own half of my California menagerie, and you must lend me those pigeons."

"Mr. Adams, they are too rare and valuable a bird to be hawked about in that manner."

"Oh, don't be a fool," replied Adams. "Rare bird, indeed! Why, they are just as common in California as any other pigeon; I could have brought a hundred of them from San Francisco if I had thought of it."

"But why did you not think of it?" I asked, with a suppressed smile.





GRIZZLY ADAMS AND HIS FAMILY.



"Because they are so common there," said Adams, "I did not think they would be any curiosity here."

I was ready to burst with laughter to see how readily Adams swallowed the bait, but, maintaining the most rigid gravity, I replied :

"Oh, well, Mr. Adams, if they are really so common in California, you had probably better take them, and you may write over and have half a dozen pairs sent to me for the Museum."

Six or eight weeks after this incident, I was in the California Menagerie, and noticed that the "Golden Pigeons" had assumed a frightfully mottled appearance. Their feathers had grown out, and they were half white. Adams had been so busy with his bears that he had not noticed the change. I called him up to the pigeon-cage and remarked :

"Mr. Adams, I fear you will lose your Golden Pigeons ; they must be very sick ; I observe they are turning quite pale."

Adams looked at them a moment with astonishment, then turning to me, and seeing that I could not suppress a smile, he indignantly exclaimed :

"Blast the Golden Pigeons ! You had better take them back to the Museum. You can't humbug me with your painted pigeons !"

This was too much, and "I laughed till I cried," to witness the mixed look of astonishment and vexation which marked the grizzly features of old Adams.

After the exhibition on Thirteenth Street and Broadway had been open six weeks, the doctor insisted that Adams should sell out his share in the animals and settle up his worldly affairs, for he assured him that he was growing weaker every day, and his earthly existence must soon terminate. "I shall live a good deal longer than you doctors think for," replied Adams, doggedly ; and then, seeming after all to realise the truth of the doctor's assertion, he turned to me and said : "Well, Mr. Barnum, you must buy me out." He named his price for his half of the "show," and I accepted his offer. We had arranged to exhibit the bears in Connecticut and Massachusetts during the summer, in connection



with a circus, and Adams insisted that I should hire him to travel for the season and exhibit the bears in their curious performances. He offered to go for \$60 per week and travelling expenses of himself and wife. I replied that I would gladly engage him as long as he could stand it, but I advised him to give up business and go to his home in Massachusetts; "for," I remarked, "you are growing weaker every day, and at best cannot stand it more than a fortnight."

"What will you give me extra if I will travel and exhibit the bears every day for ten weeks," added old Adams, eagerly.

"Five hundred dollars," I replied, with a laugh.

"Done!" exclaimed Adams, "I will do it, so draw up an agreement to that effect at once. But, mind you, draw it payable to my wife, for I may be too weak to attend to business after the ten weeks are up, and if I perform my part of the contract, I want her to get the \$500 without any trouble."

I drew up a contract to pay him \$60 per week for his services, and if he continued to exhibit the bears for ten consecutive weeks I was then to hand him, or his wife, \$500 extra.

"You have lost your \$500!" exclaimed Adams on taking the contract; "for I am bound to live and earn it."

"I hope you may, with all my heart, and a hundred years more if you desire it," I replied.

"Call me a fool if I don't earn the \$500!" exclaimed Adams, with a triumphant laugh.

The "show" started off in a few days, and at the end of a fortnight I met him in Hartford, Connecticut.

"Well, Adams," said I, "you seem to stand it pretty well. I hope you and your wife are comfortable?"

"Yes," he replied, with a laugh; "and you may as well try to be comfortable, too, for your \$500 is a goner."

"All right," I replied; "I hope you will grow better every day."

But I saw by his pale face and other indications that he was rapidly failing. In three weeks more, I met him again at New Bedford, Massachusetts. It seemed to me, then, that



he could not live a week, for his eyes were glassy and his hands trembled, but his pluck was as great as ever.

"This hot weather is pretty bad for me," he said, "but my ten weeks are half expired, and I am good for your \$500, and probably a month or two longer."

This was said with as much bravado as if he was offering to bet upon a horse-race. I offered to pay him half of the \$500, if he would give up and go home; but he peremptorily declined making any compromise whatever. I met him the ninth week in Boston. He had failed considerably since I last saw him, but he still continued to exhibit the bears, although he was too weak to lead them in, and he chuckled over his almost certain triumph. I laughed in return, and sincerely congratulated him on his nerve and probable success. I remained with him until the tenth week was finished, and handed him his \$500. He took it with a leer of satisfaction, and remarked, that he was sorry that I was a teetotaler, for he would like to stand treat!

Just before the menagerie left New York, I had paid \$150 for a new hunting-suit, made of beaver skins, similar to the one which Adams had worn. This I intended for Herr Driesbach, the animal-tamer, who was engaged by me to take the place of Adams, whenever he should be compelled to give up. Adams, on starting from New York, asked me to loan this new dress to him to perform in once in awhile on a fair day, where he had a large audience, for his own costume was considerably soiled. I did so, and now, when I handed him his \$500, he remarked:

"Mr. Barnum, I suppose you are going to give me this new hunting-dress?"

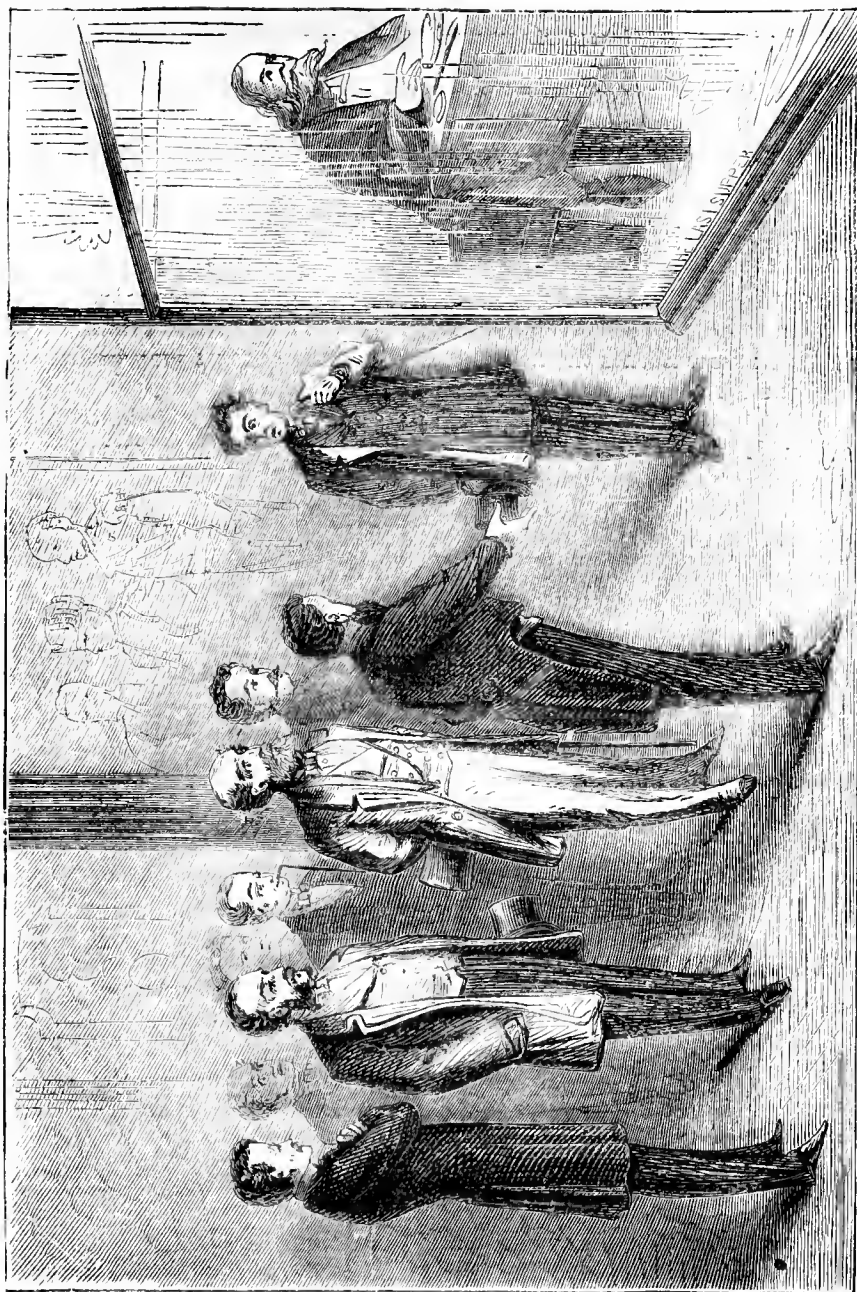
"Oh, no," I replied, "I got that for your successor, who will exhibit the bears to-morrow; besides, you have no possible use for it."

"Now, don't be mean, but lend me the dress, if you won't give it to me, for I want to wear it home to my native village."

I could not refuse the poor old man anything, and I therefore replied:

"Well, Adams, I will lend you the dress; but you will send it back to me!"





THE PRINCE IN THE MUSEUM.



"Yes, when I have done with it," he replied, with an evident chuckle of triumph.

I thought to myself, He will soon be done with it, and replied: "That's all right."

A new idea evidently struck him, for, with a brightening look of satisfaction, he said:

"Now, Barnum, you have made a good thing out of the California menagerie, and so have I; but you will make a heap more. So if you don't give me this new hunter's dress, just draw a little writing, and sign it, saying that I may wear it until I have done with it."

I knew that in a few days, at longest, he would be "done" with this world altogether, and, to gratify him, I cheerfully drew and signed the paper.

"Come, old Yankee, I've got you this time—see if I hain't!" exclaimed Adams, with a broad grin, as he took the paper.

I smiled, and said:

"All right, my dear fellow; the longer you live the better I shall like it."

We parted, and he went to Neponset, a small town near Boston, where his wife and daughter lived. He took at once to his bed, and never rose from it again. The excitement had passed away, and his vital energies could accomplish no more. The fifth day after arriving home, the physician told him he could not live until the next morning. He received the announcement in perfect calmness, and with the most apparent indifference; then, turning to his wife, with a smile, he requested her to have him buried in the new hunting-suit. "For," said he, "Barnum agreed to let me have it until I have done with it, and I was determined to fix his flint this time. He shall never see that dress again!" That dress was indeed the shroud in which he was entombed.

After the death of Adams, the grizzly bears and other animals, were added to the collection in my Museum, and I employed Herr Driesbach, the celebrated lion-tamer, as an exhibitor. Some time afterwards the bears were sold to a menagerie company, but I kept "Old Neptune," the sea-lion, for several years, sending him occasionally for exhibitions in other cities, as far west as Chicago.



On the thirteenth of October, 1860, the Prince of Wales, then making a tour in the United States, in company with his suite, visited the American Museum. This was a very great compliment, since it was the only place of amusement the Prince attended in this country. Unfortunately, I was in Bridgeport at the time, and the Museum was in charge of my manager, Mr. Greenwood.

On leaving the Museum, the Prince asked to see Mr. Barnum, and when he was told that I was out of town, he remarked: "We have missed the most interesting feature of the establishment." The Prince and his suite had left their autographs in the establishment, as mementoes of their visit.





## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## MORE ABOUT THE MUSEUM.

IN 1861, I learned that some fishermen at the mouth of the St. Lawrence had succeeded in capturing a living white whale, and I was also informed that a whale of this kind, if placed in a box lined with sea-weed and partially filled with salt water, could be transported by land to a considerable distance, and be kept alive. It was simply necessary that an attendant, supplied with a barrel of salt water and a sponge, should keep the mouth and blow-hole of the whale constantly moist.

Having made up my mind to capture and transport to my Museum at least two living whales, I prepared in the basement of the building a brick and cement tank, forty feet long, and eighteen feet wide for their reception. This done, I started upon my whaling expedition. Going by rail to Quebec, and thence by the Grand Trunk Railroad, ninety miles, to Wells river, I chartered a sloop to Elbow Island (Isle au Coudres), in the St. Lawrence river, populated by Canadian French people. I contracted with a party of twenty-four fishermen, to capture for me, alive and unharmed, a couple of white whales, scores of which could at all times be discovered by their "spouting" within sight of the island.

The plan decided upon was to plant in the river a "kraal," composed of stakes driven down in the form of a V, leaving the broad end open for the whales to enter. This was done in a shallow place, with the point of the kraal towards the shore; and if by chance one or more whales should enter the trap at high water, my fisherman were to occupy the entrance with their boats, and keep up a tremendous splashing and noise till the tide receded, when the frightened whales would find themselves nearly "high and dry," or with too little water to enable them to swim, and their capture would be the next thing in order. This was to be effected by securing a





CAPTURING WHITE WHALES.



slip-noose of stout rope over their tails, and towing them to the sea-weed lined boxes in which they were to be transported to New York.

It was aggravating to see the whales glide so near the trap without going into it, and our patience was sorely tried. One day a whale actually went into the kraal, and the fishermen proposed to capture it; but I wanted another, and while we waited for number two to go in number one went out. After several days I was awakened at daylight by a great noise, and amid the clamour of many voices, I caught the cheering news that two whales were even then within the kraal. Leaving the details of capture and transportation to my trusty assistants, I started at once for New York, leaving at every station, on the line instructions to telegraph operators to "take off" all whaling messages that passed over the wires to New York, and to inform their fellow-townsmen at what hour the whales would pass through each place.

The result of these arrangements may be imagined; at every station crowds of people came to the cars to see the whales which were travelling by land to Barnum's Museum, and those who did not see the monsters with their own eyes, at least saw someone who had seen them, and I thus secured a tremendous advertisement, seven hundred miles long, for the American Museum.

Arrived in New York, despatches continued to come from the whaling expedition every few hours. These I bulletined in front of the Museum and sent copies to the papers. The excitement was intense, and, when at last, these marine monsters arrived and were swimming in the tank that had been prepared for them, anxious thousands literally rushed to see the strangest curiosities ever exhibited in New York.

Thus was my first whaling expedition a great success; but I did not know how to feed or to take care of the monsters, and, moreover, they were in fresh water, and this, with the bad air in the basement, may have hastened their death, which occurred a few days after their arrival, but not before thousands of people had seen them. Not at all discouraged, I resolved to try again. My plan now was to connect the water of New York bay with the basement of the Museum by



means of iron pipes under the street, and a steam engine on the dock to pump the water. This I actually did at a cost of several thousand dollars, with an extra thousand to the aldermanic "ring" for the privilege, and I constructed another tank in the second floor of the building. This tank was built of slate and French glass plates six feet long, five feet broad, and one inch thick, imported expressly for the purpose, and the tank, when completed, was twenty-four feet square, and cost \$4,000. It was kept constantly supplied with what would be called, Hibernically, "fresh" salt water, and inside of it I soon had two white whales, caught, as the first had been, hundreds of miles below Quebec, to which city they were carried by a sailing vessel, and from thence were brought by railway to New York. Certain envious people started the report that my whales were only porpoises, but this petty malice was turned to good account, for Professor Agassiz, of Harvard University, came to see them, and gave me a certificate that they were genuine white whales, and this indorsement I published far and wide.

The tank which I had built in the basement served for a yet more interesting exhibition. On the 12th of August, 1861, I began to exhibit the first and only genuine hippopotamus that had ever been seen in America.

Having a stream of salt water at my command at every high tide, I was enabled to make splendid additions to the beautiful aquarium, which I was the first to introduce into this country. I not only procured living sharks, porpoises, sea-horses, and many rare fish from the sea in the vicinity of New York, but in the summer of 1861, and for several summers in succession, I despatched a fishing smack and crew to the Islands of Bermuda and its neighbourhood, whence they brought scores of specimens of the beautiful "angel fish," and numerous other tropical fish of brilliant colours and unique forms. In the same year, I bought out the Aquarial Gardens in Boston, and soon after removed the collection to the Museum.

In 1861, I found, and first exhibited, a remarkable dwarf, since grown famous as Commodore Nutt.

In 1862, I sent the Commodore to Washington, and, joining



him there, I received an invitation from President Lincoln to call at the White House with my little friend. Arriving at the appointed hour, I was informed that the President was in a special Cabinet meeting, but that he had left word if I called to be shown in to him with the Commodore. These were dark days in the rebellion, and I felt that my visit, if not ill-timed, must at all events be brief. When we were admitted, Mr. Lincoln received us cordially, and introduced us to the members of the Cabinet. When Mr. Chase was introduced as the Secretary of the Treasury, the little Commodore remarked :

"I suppose you are the gentleman who is spending so much of Uncle Sam's money?"

"No, indeed," said Secretary of War Stanton, very promptly: "I am spending the money."

"Well," said Commodore Nutt, "it is in a good cause, anyhow, and I guess it will come out all right."

His apt remark created much amusement. Mr. Lincoln then bent down his long, lank body, and taking Nutt by the hand, he said:

"Commodore, permit me to give you a parting word or advice. When you are in command of your fleet, if you find yourself in danger of being taken prisoner, I advise you to wade ashore."

The Commodore found the laugh was against him, but placing himself at the side of the President, and gradually raising his eyes up the whole length of Mr. Lincoln's long legs, he replied:

"I guess, Mr. President, you could do that better than I could."

Commodore Nutt and the Nova Scotia giantess, Anna Swan, illustrate the old proverb sufficiently to show how extremes occasionally met in my Museum. He was the shortest of men and she was the tallest of women. I first heard of her through a Quaker who came into my office one day and told me of a wonderful girl, seventeen years of age, who resided near him at Pictou, Nova Scotia, and who was probably the tallest girl in the world. I asked him to obtain her exact height, on his return home, which he did, and sent



it to me, and I at once sent an agent who in due time came back with Anna Swan. She was an intelligent and by no means ill-looking girl, and during the long period while she was in my employ, she was visited by thousands of persons. After the burning of my second Museum, she went to England, where she attracted great attention.

In 1864, ten or twelve chiefs of as many different tribes, visited the President of the United States, at Washington. By a pretty liberal outlay of money, I succeeded in inducing the interpreter to bring them to New York, and to pass some days at my Museum. Of course, getting these Indians to dance, or to give any illustration of their games or pastimes, was out of the question. They were real chiefs of powerful tribes, and would no more have consented to give an exhibition of themselves than the chief magistrate of our own nation would have done. Their interpreter could not therefore promise that they would remain at the Museum for any definite time; "for," said he, "you can only keep them just so long as they suppose all your patrons come to pay them visits of honour. If they suspected that your Museum was a place where people paid for entering," he continued, "you could not keep them a moment after the discovery."

On their arrival at the Museum, therefore, I took them upon the stage and personally introduced them to the public. The Indians liked this attention from me, as they had been informed that I was the proprietor of the great establishment in which they were invited and honoured guests. My patrons were of course pleased to see these old chiefs, as they knew they were the "*real thing*," and several of them were known to the public, either as being friendly or cruel to the whites. After one or two appearances on the stage, I took them in carriages and visited the Mayor of New York in the Governor's room at the City Hall. Here the Mayor made them a speech of welcome, which being interpreted to the savages was responded to by a speech from one of the chiefs, in which he thanked the "Great Father" of the city for his pleasant words, and for his kindness in pointing out the portraits of his predecessors hanging on the walls of the Governor's room.

On another occasion I took them by special invitation to



visit one of the large public schools up town. The teachers were pleased to see them, and arranged an exhibition of special exercises by the scholars, which they thought would be most likely to gratify their barbaric visitors. At the close of these exercises, one old chief arose, and simply said: "This is all new to us. We are mere unlearned sons of the forest, and cannot understand what we have seen and heard."

On other occasions, I took them to ride in Central Park, and through different portions of the city. At every street corner which we passed, they would express their astonishment to each other at seeing the long rows of houses which extended both ways on either side of each cross-street. Of course, between each of these outside visits I would return with them to the Museum, and secure two or three appearances upon the stage to receive the people who had there congregated "to do them honour."

As they regarded me as their host, they did not hesitate to trespass upon my hospitality. Whenever their eyes rested upon a glittering shell among my specimens of conchology, especially if it had several brilliant colours, one would take off his coat, another his shirt, and insist that I should exchange my shell for their garment. When I declined the exchange, but on the contrary presented them with the coveted article, I soon found I had established a dangerous precedent. Immediately, they all commenced to beg for everything in my vast collection, which they happened to take a liking to. This cost me many valuable specimens, and often "put me to my trumps" for an excuse to avoid giving them things which I could not part with.

Among these Indians were War Bonnet, Lean Bear, and Hand-in-the-Water, chiefs of the Cheyennes; Yellow Buffalo, of the Kiowas; Yellow Bear, of the same tribe; Jacob, of the Caddos; and White Bull, of the Apaches. The little wiry chief known as Yellow Bear had killed many whites as they had travelled through the Far West. He was a sly, treacherous, bloodthirsty savage, who would think no more of scalping a family of women and children than a butcher would of wringing the neck of a chicken. But now he was on a mission to the "Great Father" at Washington, seeking for



presents and favours for his tribe, and he pretended to be exceedingly meek and humble, and continually urged the interpreter to announce him as a "great friend to the white man." He would fawn about me, and although not speaking or understanding a word of our language, would try to convince me that he loved me dearly.

In exhibiting these Indian warriors on the stage, I explained to the large audiences the names and characteristics of each. When I came to Yellow Bear I would pat him familiarly upon the shoulder, which always caused him to look up to me with a pleasant smile, while he softly stroked down my arm with his right hand in the most loving manner. Knowing that he could not understand a word I said, I pretended to be complimenting him to the audience, while I was really saying something like the following :

"This little Indian, ladies and gentlemen, is Yellow Bear, chief of the Kiowas. He has killed, no doubt, scores of white persons, and he is probably the meanest, black-hearted rascal that lives in the Far West." Here I patted him on the head, and he, supposing I was sounding his praises, would smile, fawn upon me, and stroke my arm, while I continued : "If the blood-thirsty little villain understood what I was saying, he would kill me in a moment ; but as he thinks I am complimenting him, I can safely state the truth to you, that he is a lying, thieving, treacherous, murderous monster. He has tortured to death, poor, unprotected women, murdered their husbands, brained their helpless little ones ; and he would gladly do the same to you or to me, if he thought he could escape punishment. This is but a faint description of the character of Yellow Bear." Here I gave him another patronising pat on the head, and he, with a pleasant smile, bowed to the audience, as much as to say that my words were quite true, and that he thanked me very much for the high encomiums I had so generously heaped upon him.

After they had been about a week at the Museum, one of the chiefs discovered that visitors paid money for entering. This information he soon communicated to the other chiefs, and I heard an immediate murmur of discontent. Their eyes were opened, and no power could induce them to appear again



upon the stage. Their dignity had been offended, and their wild, flashing eyes were anything but agreeable. Indeed, I hardly felt safe in their presence, and it was with a feeling of relief that I witnessed their departure for Washington the next morning.





## CHAPTER XXIX.

MR. AND MRS. GENERAL TOM THUMB.

IN 1862 I heard of an extraordinary dwarf girl, named Lavinia Warren, who was residing with her parents at Middleboro', Massachusetts, and I sent an invitation to her and her parents to come, at my expense, and visit me at Bridgeport. They came, and I found her to be a most intelligent and refined young lady, well educated, and an accomplished, beautiful and perfectly developed woman in miniature. I succeeded in making an engagement with her for several years, during which she contracted—as dwarfs are said to have the power to do—to visit Great Britain, France, and other foreign lands.

Having arranged the terms of her engagement, I took her to the house of one of my daughters in New York, where she remained quietly, while I was procuring her wardrobe and jewellery, and making arrangements for her début.

I purchased a very splendid wardrobe for Miss Warren, including scores of the richest dresses that could be procured, costly jewels, and in fact everything that could add to the charms of her naturally charming little person. She was then placed on exhibition at the Museum, and from the day of her début she was an extraordinary success. Commodore Nutt was on exhibition with her, and although he was several years her junior, he evidently took a great fancy to her. One day I presented to Lavinia a diamond and emerald ring, and as it did not exactly fit her finger, I told her I would give her another one and that she might present this one to the Commodore in her own name. She did so, and an unlooked-for effect was speedily apparent; the little Commodore felt sure that this was a love token, and poor Lavinia was in the greatest trouble, for she considered herself quite a woman, and regarded the Commodore only as a nice little boy. But she did not like to offend him, and while she did not encourage, she did not



openly repel his attentions. Miss Lavinia Warren, however, was never destined to be Mrs. Commodore Nutt.

It was by no means an unnatural circumstance that I should be suspected of having instigated and brought about the marriage of Tom Thumb with Lavinia Warren. Had I done this, I should at this day have felt no regrets, for it has proved in an eminent degree, one of the "happy marriages." I only say, what is known to all of their immediate friends, that from first to last their engagement was an affair of the heart—a case of "love at first sight"—that the attachment was mutual, and that it only grows with the lapse of time. But I had neither part nor lot in instigating or in occasioning the marriage. And as I am anxious to be put right before the public, I have procured the consent of all the parties to a sketch of the wooing, winning and nuptials. Of course I should not lay these details before the public, except with the sanction of those most interested. In this they consent to pay the penalty of distinction. And if the wooings of kings and queens must be told, why not the courtship and marriage of General and Mrs. Tom Thumb?

In the autumn of 1862, when Lavinia Warren was on exhibition at the Museum, Tom Thumb had no business engagement with me; in fact, he was not on exhibition at the time at all; he was taking a "vacation" at his house in Bridgeport. Whenever he came to New York he naturally called upon me, his old friend, at the Museum. He happened to be in the city at the time referred to, and one day he called, quite unexpectedly to me, while Lavinia was holding one of her levées. Here he now saw her for the first time, and very naturally made her acquaintance. He had a short interview with her, after which he came directly to my private office and desired to see me alone. Of course I complied with his request, but without the remotest suspicion as to his object. I closed the door, and the General took a seat. His first question let in the light. He inquired about the family of Lavinia Warren. I gave him the facts, which I clearly perceived gave him satisfaction of a peculiar sort. He then said, with great frankness, and with no less earnestness:

"Mr. Barnum, that is the most charming little lady I ever



saw, and I believe she was created on purpose to be my wife ! Now," he continued, "you have always been a friend of mine, and I want you to say a good word for me to her. I have got plenty of money, and I want to marry and settle down in life, and I really feel as if I must marry that young lady."

The little General was highly excited, and his general manner betrayed the usual anxiety, which, I doubt not, most of my readers will understand without a description. I could not repress a smile nor forget my joke, and I said :

"Lavinia is engaged already."

"To whom—Commodore Nutt ?" asked Tom Thumb, with much earnestness, and with some exhibition of the "green-eyed monster."

"No, General, to me," I replied.

"Never mind," said the General, laughing, "you can exhibit her for awhile, and then give up the engagement ; but I do hope you will favour my suit with her."

"Well, General," I replied, "I will not oppose you in your suit, but you must do your own courting. I tell you, however, the Commodore will be jealous of you ; and more than that, Miss Warren is nobody's fool, and you will have to proceed very cautiously if you can succeed in winning her affections."

The General thanked me, and promised to be very discreet. A change now came suddenly over him in several particulars. He had been (much to his credit) very fond of his country home in Bridgeport, where he spent his intervals of rest with his horses, and especially with his yacht, for his fondness for the water was his great passion. But now he was constantly having occasion to visit the city, and horses and yachts were strangely neglected. He had a married sister in New York and his visits to her multiplied, for, of course, he came to New York "to see his sister !" His mother, who resided in Bridgeport, remarked that Charles had never before shown so much brotherly affection, nor so much fondness for city life.

His visits to the Museum were very frequent, and it was noticeable that new relations were being established between him and Commodore Nutt. The Commodore was not exactly jealous, yet he strutted around like a bantam rooster when-



ever the General approached Lavinia. One day he and the General got into a friendly scuffle in the dressing-room, and the Commodore threw the General upon his back in "double quick" time. The Commodore was lithe, wiry, and quick in his movements, but the General is naturally slow, and although he was considerably heavier than the Commodore, he soon found that he could not stand before him in a personal encounter. Moreover, the Commodore was naturally quick-tempered, and, when excited, he bragged about his knowledge of "the manly art of self-defence," and sometimes talked about pistols and bowie knives, &c. Tom Thumb, on the contrary, is by natural disposition decidedly a man of peace; hence, in this, agreeing with Falstaff as to what constituted the "better part of valour," he was strongly inclined to keep his distance if the little Commodore showed any belligerent symptoms.

In the course of several weeks the General found numerous opportunities to talk with Lavinia, while the Commodore was performing on the stage, or was otherwise engaged; and, to a watchful discerner, it was evident he was making encouraging progress in the affair of the heart. He also managed to meet Lavinia on Sunday afternoons and evenings, without the knowledge of the Commodore; but he assured me he had not yet dared to suggest matrimony.

He finally returned to Bridgeport, and privately begged that on the following Saturday I would take Lavinia up to my house, and also invite him.

His immediate object in this was that his mother might get acquainted with Lavinia, for he feared opposition from that source whenever the idea of his marriage should be suggested. I could do no less than accede to his proposal, and on the following Friday, while Lavinia and the Commodore were sitting in the green-room, I said:—

"Lavinia, you may go up to Bridgeport with me to-morrow morning, and remain until Monday."

"Thank you," she replied; "it will be quite a relief to get into the country for a couple of days."

The Commodore immediately pricked up his ears, and said:—



"Mr. Barnum, I should like to go to Bridgeport to-morrow."

"What for?" I asked.

"I want to see my little ponies; I have not seen them for several months," he replied.

I whispered in his ear, "You little rogue, *that* is the pony you want to see," pointing to Lavinia.

He insisted I was mistaken. When I remarked that he could not well be spared from the Museum, he said :—

"Oh! I can perform at half-past seven o'clock, and then jump on to the eight o'clock evening train, and go up by myself, reaching Bridgeport before eleven, and return early Monday morning."

I feared there would be a clashing of interests between the rival pigmies; but wishing to please him, I consented to his request, especially as Lavinia also favoured it. I wished I could then fathom that little woman's heart, and see whether she (who must have discovered the secret of the General's frequent visits to the Museum) desired the Commodore's visit in order to stir up the General's ardour, or whether, as seemed to me the more likely, she was seeking in this way to prevent a *dénoûment* which she was not inclined to favour. Certain it is, that though I was the General's confidant, and knew all his desires upon the subject, no person had discovered the slightest evidence that Lavinia Warren had ever entertained the remotest suspicion of his thoughts regarding marriage. If she had made the discovery, as I assume, she kept the secret well. In fact, I assured Tom Thumb that every indication, as far as any of us could observe, was to the effect that his suit would be rejected. The little General was fidgety, but determined; hence he was anxious to have Lavinia meet his mother, and also see his possessions in Bridgeport, for he owned considerable land and numerous houses there.

The General met us at the dépôt in Bridgeport on Saturday morning, and drove us to my house in his own carriage—his coachman being tidily dressed, with a broad velvet ribbon and silver buckle placed upon his hat expressly for the occasion. Lavinia was duly informed that this was the General's "turn out;" and after resting half an hour at Lindencroft, he



took her out to ride. He stopped a few moments at his mother's house, where she saw the apartments which his father had built expressly for him, and filled with the most gorgeous furniture—all corresponding to his own diminutive size. Then he took her to East Bridgeport, and undoubtedly took occasion to point out in great detail all the houses which he owned, for he depended much upon having his wealth make some impression upon her. They returned, and the General stayed to lunch. I asked Lavinia how she liked her ride; she replied:—

“It was very pleasant, but,” she added, “it seems as if you and Tom Thumb owned about all Bridgeport!”

The General took his leave, and returned with his mother at five o'clock to dinner. Mrs. Stratton remained until seven o'clock. She expressed herself charmed with Lavinia Warren; but not a suspicion passed her mind that little Charlie was endeavouring to give her this accomplished young lady as a daughter-in-law. The General had privately asked me to invite him to stay over night, “For,” said he, “if I get a chance, I intend to ‘pop the question’ before the Commodore arrives.” So I told his mother I thought the General had better stop with us over night, as the Commodore would be up in the late train, adding that it would be more pleasant for the little folks to be together. She assented, and the General was happy.

After tea, Lavinia and the General sat down to play backgammon. As nine o'clock approached, I remarked that it was about time to retire, but somebody would have to sit up until nearly eleven o'clock, in order to let in the Commodore. The General replied:—

“I will sit up with pleasure, if Miss Warren will remain also.”

Lavinia carelessly replied, that she was accustomed to late hours, and she would wait and see the Commodore. A little supper was placed upon the table for the Commodore, and the family retired.

Now, it happened that a couple of mischievous young ladies were visiting at my house, one of whom was to sleep with Lavinia. They were suspicious that the General was going to propose to Lavinia that evening, and, in a spirit of un-



governable curiosity, they determined, notwithstanding its manifest impropriety, to witness the operation, if they could possibly manage to do so on the sly. Of course, this was inexcusable, the more so as so few of my readers, had they been placed under the same temptation, would have been guilty of such an impropriety! Perhaps I should hesitate to use the testimony of such witnesses, or even to trust it. But a few weeks after, they told the little couple the whole story, were forgiven, and all had a hearty laugh over it.

It so happened that the door of the sitting-room, in which the General and Lavinia were left at the backgammon board, opened into the hall just at the side of the stairs, and these young misses, turning out the lights in the hall, seated themselves upon the stairs in the dark, where they had a full view of the cozy little couple, and were within easy ear-shot of all that was said.

The house was still. The General soon acknowledged himself vanquished at backgammon, and gave it up. After sitting a few moments, he evidently thought it best to put a clincher on the financial part of his abilities; so he drew from his pocket a policy of insurance, and handing it to Lavinia, he asked her if she knew what it was.

Examining it, she replied, "It is an insurance policy. I see you keep your property insured."

"But the beauty of it is, it is not my property," replied the General, "and yet I get the benefit of the insurance in case of fire. You will see," he continued, unfolding the policy, "this is the property of Mr. Williams, but here, you will observe, it reads, 'loss, if any, payable to Charles S. Stratton, as his interest may appear.' The fact is, I loaned Mr. Williams three thousand dollars, took a mortgage on his house, and made him insure it for my benefit. In this way, you perceive, I get my interest, and he has to pay the taxes."

"That is a very wise way, I should think," remarked Lavinia.

"That is the way I do all my business," remarked the General, complacently, as he returned the huge insurance policy to his pocket. "You see," he continued, "I never lend any of my money without taking bond and mortgage



security. Then I have no trouble with taxes; my principal is secure, and I receive my interest regularly."

The explanation seemed satisfactory to Lavinia, and the General's courage began to rise. Drawing his chair a little nearer to hers, he said:—

"So you are going to Europe soon?"

"Yes," replied Lavinia; "Mr. Barnum intends to take me over in a couple of months."

"You will find it very pleasant," remarked the General; "I have been there twice, in fact I have spent six years abroad and I like the old countries very much."

"I hope I shall like the trip, and I expect I shall," responded Lavinia; "for Mr. Barnum says I shall visit all the principal cities, and he has no doubt I shall be invited to appear before the Queen of England, the Emperor and Empress of France, the King of Prussia, the Emperor of Austria, and at the courts of any other countries which we may visit. Oh! I shall like that, it will be so new to me."

"Yes, it will be very interesting indeed. I have visited most of the crowned heads," remarked the General, with an evident feeling of self-congratulation. "But are you not afraid you will be lonesome in a strange country?" asked the General.

"No, I think there is no danger of that, for friends will accompany me," was the reply.

"I wish I was going over, for I know all about the different countries, and could explain them all to you," remarked Tom Thumb.

"That would be very nice," said Lavinia.

"Do you think so?" said the General, moving his chair still closer to Lavinia's.

"Of course," replied Lavinia, coolly, "for I, being a stranger to all the habits and customs of the people, as well as to the country, it would be pleasant to have some person along who could answer all my foolish questions."

"I should like it first-rate, if Mr. Barnum would engage me," said the General.

"I thought you remarked the other day that you had money



enough, and were tired of travelling," said Lavinia, with a slightly mischievous look from one corner of her eye.

"That depends upon my company while travelling," replied the General.

"You might not find my company very agreeable."

"I would be glad to risk it."

"Well, perhaps Mr. Barnum would engage you, if you asked him," said Lavinia.

"Would you really like to have me go?" asked the General, quietly insinuating his arm around her waist, but hardly close enough to touch her.

"Of course I would," was the reply.

The little General's arm clasped the waist closer as he turned his face nearer to hers, and said:

"Don't you think it would be pleasanter if we went as man and wife?"

The little fairy quickly disengaged his arm, and remarked that the General was a funny fellow to joke in that way.

"I am not joking at all," said the General, earnestly; "it is quite too serious a matter for that."

"I wonder why the Commodore don't come?" said Lavinia.

"I hope you are not anxious for his arrival, for I am sure I am not," responded the General; "and what is more, I do hope you will say 'Yes,' before he comes at all!"

"Really, Mr. Stratton," said Lavinia, with dignity, "if you are in earnest in your strange proposal, I must say I am surprised."

"Well, I hope you are not *offended*," replied the General, "for I was never more in earnest in my life, and I hope you will consent. The first moment I saw you I felt that you were created to be my wife."

"But this is so sudden."

"Not so very sudden; it is several months since we first met, and you know all about me and my family, and I hope you find nothing to object to in me."

"Not at all; on the contrary, I have found you very agreeable, in fact I like you very much as a friend, but I have no thought of marrying, and——"



"And what, my dear?" said the General, giving her a kiss. "Now, I beg of you, don't have any 'buts' or 'ands' about it. You say you like me as a friend, why will you not like me as a husband? You ought to get married; I love you dearly, and I want you for my wife. Now, dearey, the Commodore will be here in a few minutes, I may not have a chance to see you again alone; do say that we will be married, and I will get Mr. Barnum to give up your engagement."

Lavinia hesitated, and finally said:

"I think I love you well enough to consent, but I have always said I would never marry without my mother's consent."

"Oh! I'll ask your mother. May I ask your mother? Come, say yes to that, and I will go and see her next week. May I do that, pet?"

Then there was a sound of something very much like the popping of several corks from as many beer-bottles. The young eavesdroppers had no doubt as to the character of these reports, nor did they doubt that they sealed the betrothal, for immediately after they heard Lavinia say:

"Yes, Charles, you may ask my mother." Another volley of reports followed, and then Lavinia said, "Now Charles, don't whisper this to a living soul; let us keep our own secrets for the present."

"All right," said the General, "I will say nothing; but next Tuesday I shall start to see your mother."

"Perhaps you may find it difficult to obtain her consent," said Lavinia.

At that moment a carriage drove up to the door, and immediately the bell was rung, and the little Commodore entered.

"*You* here, General?" said the Commodore, as he espied his rival.

"Yes," said Lavinia, "Mr. Barnum asked him to stay, and we were waiting for you; come, warm yourself."

"I am not cold," said the Commodore; "where is Mr. Barnum?"

"He has gone to bed," remarked the General; "but a nice supper has been prepared for you."



"I am not hungry, I thank you: I am going to bed. Which room does Mr. Barnum sleep in?" said the little bantam, in a petulant tone of voice.

His question was answered; the young eavesdroppers scampered to their sleeping apartments, and the Commodore soon came to my room, where he found me indulging in the foolish habit of reading in bed.

"Mr. Barnum, does Tom Thumb board here," asked the Commodore sarcastically.

"No," said I, "Tom Thumb does not *board* here. I invited him to stop over night; so don't be foolish, but go to bed."

"Oh, it's no affair of mine. I don't care anything about it; but I thought he had taken up his board here," replied the Commodore, and off he went to bed, evidently in a bad humour.

Ten minutes afterwards Tom Thumb came rushing into my room, and, closing the door, he caught hold of my hand in a high state of excitement and whispered:

"We are engaged, Mr. Barnum! we are engaged! we are engaged!" and he jumped up and down in the greatest glee.

"Is that possible?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, indeed it is; but you must not mention it," he responded; "we agreed to tell nobody, so please don't say a word. I must tell *you*, of course, 'but mum is the word.' I am going, Tuesday, to get her mother's consent."

I promised secrecy, and the General retired in as happy a mood as I ever saw him. Lavinia also retired, but not a hint did she give the young lady with whom she slept regarding the engagement. Indeed, our family plied her upon the subject the next day, but not a breath passed her lips that would give the slightest indication of what had transpired. She was quite sociable with the Commodore, and as the General concluded to go home the next morning, the Commodore's equanimity and good feelings were fully restored. The General made a call of half an hour on Sunday evening, and managed to have an interview with Lavinia. The next morning she and the Commodore returned to New York in good spirits, I remaining in Bridgeport.

The General called on me on Monday, however, bringing a



very nice letter which he had written to Lavinia's mother. He had concluded to send this letter by his trusty friend, Mr. George A. Wells, instead of going himself, and he had just seen Mr. Wells, who had consented to go to Middleborough with the letter the following day, and to urge the General's suit, if it should be necessary.

The General went to New York on Wednesday, and was there to await Mr. Wells' arrival. On Wednesday morning the General and Lavinia walked into my office, and after closing the door, the little General said :

"Mr. Barnum, I want somebody to tell the Commodore that Lavinia and I are engaged, for I am afraid there will be a 'row' when he hears of it."

"Do it yourself, General," I replied.

"Oh," said the General, almost shuddering. "I would not dare to do it ; he might knock me down."

"I will do it," said Lavinia ; and it was at once arranged that I should call the Commodore and Lavinia into my office, and either she or myself would tell him. The General, of course, "vamosed."

When the Commodore joined us, and the door was closed, I said :

"Commodore, do you know what this little witch has been doing ?"

"No, I don't," he answered.

"Well, she has been cutting up one of the greatest pranks you ever heard of," I replied. "She almost deserves to be shut up for daring to do it. Can't you guess what she has done ?"

He mused a moment, and then looking at me, said in a low voice, and with a serious-looking face, "Engaged ?"

"Yes," said I, "absolutely engaged to be married to General Tom Thumb. Did you ever hear of such a thing ?"

"Is that so, Lavinia ?" asked the Commodore, looking her earnestly in the face.

"That is so," said Lavinia ; "and Mr. Wells has gone to obtain my mother's consent."

The Commodore turned pale, and choked a little, as if he



was trying to swallow something. Then, turning on his heel, he said, in a broken voice :

“ I hope you may be happy.”

As he passed out of the door, a tear rolled down his cheek.

“ That is pretty hard,” I said to Lavinia.

“ I am very sorry,” she replied, “ but I could not help it. That diamond and emerald ring which you bade me present in my name has caused all this trouble.”

Half an hour after this incident, the Commodore came to my office, and said :

“ Mr. Barnum, do you think it would be right for Miss Warren to marry Charley Stratton if her mother should object ? ”

I saw that the little fellow had still a slight hope to hang on, and I said :

“ No, indeed, it would not be right.”

“ Well she says she shall marry him any way ; that she gives her mother the chance to consent, but if she objects, she will have her own way and marry him,” said the Commodore.

“ On the contrary,” I replied, “ I will not permit it. She is engaged to go to Europe for me, and I will not release her, if her mother does not fully consent to her marrying Tom Thumb.”

The Commodore's eyes glistened with pleasure, as he replied :

“ Between you and me, Mr. Barnum, I don't believe she will give her consent.”

But the next day dissipated his hopes. Mr. Wells returned saying that Lavinia's mother at first objected, for she feared it was a contrivance to get them married for the promotion of some pecuniary advantage ; but, upon reading the letter from the General, and one still more urgent from Lavinia, and also upon hearing from Mr. Wells that, in case of their marriage, I should cancel all claims I had upon Lavinia's services, she consented.

After the Commodore had heard the news, I said to him :

“ Never mind, Commodore, Minnie Warren is a better match for you ; she is a charming little creature, and two



years younger than you, while Lavinia is several years your senior."

"I thank you, sir," replied the Commodore, pompously; "I would not marry the best woman living; I don't believe in women, any way."

I then suggested that he should stand with little Minnie, as groom and bridesmaid, at the approaching wedding.

"No, sir!" replied the Commodore, emphatically: "I won't do it!"

That idea was therefore abandoned. A few weeks subsequently, when time had reconciled the Commodore, he told me that Tom Thumb had asked him to stand as groom with Minnie, at the wedding, and he was going to do so.

"When I asked you a few weeks ago, you refused," I said.

"It was not your business to ask me," replied the Commodore, pompously. "When the proper person invited me I accepted."

The approaching wedding was announced. It created an immense excitement. Lavinia's levées at the Museum were crowded to suffocation, and her photographic pictures were in great demand. For several weeks she sold more than three hundred dollars' worth of her *cartes de visite* each day. And the daily receipts at the Museum were frequently over three thousand dollars. I engaged the General to exhibit, and to assist her in the sale of pictures, to which his own photograph, of course, was added. I could afford to give them a fine wedding, and I did so.

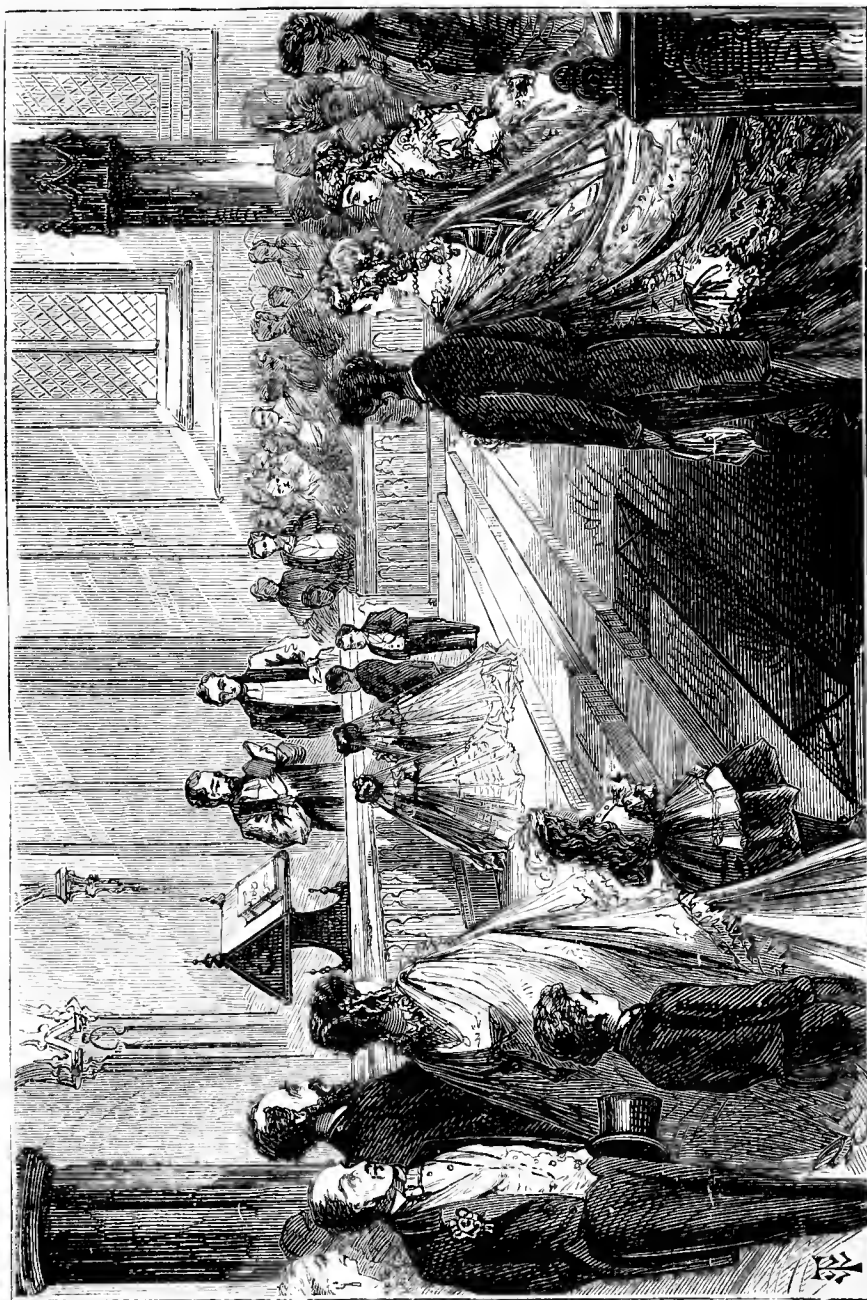
I did not hesitate to seek continued advantage from the notoriety of the prospective marriage. Accordingly, I offered the General and Lavinia fifteen thousand dollars if they would postpone the wedding for a month, and continue their exhibitions at the Museum.

"Not for fifty thousand dollars," said the General, excitedly.

"Good for you, Charley," said Lavinia, "only you ought to have said not for a *hundred thousand*, for I would not?"

They both laughed heartily at what they considered my discomfiture; and such, looked at from a business point of view, it certainly was. The wedding day approached and the public excitement grew.





MARRIAGE IN MINIATURE.



It was suggested to me that a small fortune in itself could be easily made out of the excitement. "Let the ceremony take place in the Academy of Music, charge a big price for admission, and the citizens will come in crowds." I have no manner of doubt that in this way twenty-five thousand dollars could easily have been obtained. But I had no such thought. I had promised to give the couple a genteel and graceful wedding, and I kept my word.

The day arrived, Tuesday, February 10, 1863. The ceremony was to take place in Grace Church, New York. The Rev. Junius Willey, Rector of St. John's Church in Bridgeport, assisted by the late Rev. Dr. Taylor, of Grace Church, was to officiate. The organ was played by Morgan. I know not what better, I could have done, had the wedding of a prince been in contemplation. The church was comfortably filled by a highly select audience of ladies and gentlemen, none being admitted except those having cards of invitation. Among them were governors of several of the States, to whom I had sent cards, and such of those as could not be present in person were represented by friends, to whom they had given their cards. Members of Congress were present, also generals of the army, and many other prominent public men. Numerous applications were made from wealthy and distinguished persons, for tickets to witness the ceremony, and as high as sixty dollars was offered for a single admission. But not a ticket was sold: and Tom Thumb and Lavinia Warren were pronounced "man and wife" before witnesses.

Several thousand persons attended the reception of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Thumb the same day at the Metropolitan Hotel. After this they started on a wedding tour, taking Washington in their way. They visited President Lincoln at the White House. After a couple of weeks they returned and, as they then supposed, retired to private life.

Habit, however, is indeed second nature. The General and his wife had been accustomed to excitement, and after a few months' retirement they again longed for the peculiar pleasures of a public life, and the public were eager to welcome them once more. They resumed their public career, and have since travelled around the world, holding public



exhibitions more than half the time, Commodore Nutt and Minnie Warren accompanying them.

Soon after the wedding of General Tom Thumb and Lavinia Warren, a lady came to my office and called my attention to a little six-paged pamphlet which she said she had written, entitled "Priests and Pigmies," and requested me to read it. I glanced at the title, and at once estimating the character of the publication, I promptly declined to devote any portion of my valuable time to its perusal.

"But you had better look at it, Mr. Barnum; it deeply interests you, and you may think it worth your while to buy it."

"Certainly, I will buy it, if you desire," said I, tendering her a sixpence, which I supposed to be the price of the little pamphlet.

"Oh! you quite misunderstand me; I mean buy the copyright and the entire edition, with the view of suppressing the work. It says some frightful things, I assure you," urged the author.

I lay back in my chair and fairly roared at this exceedingly feeble attempt at blackmail.

"But," persisted the lady, "suppose it says that your Museum and Grace Church are all one, what then?"

"My dear madam," I replied, "you may say what you please about me or about my Museum; you may print a hundred thousand copies of a pamphlet stating that I stole the communion service, after the wedding, from Grace Church altar, or anything else you choose to write; only have the kindness to say something about me, and then come to me and I will properly estimate the money value of your services to me as an advertising agent. Good morning, madam"—and she departed.



## CHAPTER XXX.

## POLITICAL AND PERSONAL.

IN the spring of 1865, I accepted from the Republican party a nomination to the Connecticut Legislature from the town of Fairfield, and was elected.

The speaker offered me the chairmanship of any one of several committees, and I selected that of the agricultural committee, because it would occupy but little of my time, and give me the opportunity I so much desired to devote my attention to the railway combinations.

On the thirteenth day of July, 1865, I was speaking in the Connecticut Legislature, in session at Hartford, against the railroad schemes, when a telegram was handed to me stating that the American Museum was in flames, and that its total destruction was certain. I glanced over the despatch, folded it, laid it on my desk, and calmly continued my speech. At the conclusion of my remarks, the bill I had been advocating was carried, and the House adjourned.

One of the local journals, speaking of this incident, two days after the fire, said :

"In the midst of Mr. Barnum's speech, a telegram was handed to him, announcing that his Museum was in flames, without any hope of saving any portion of his cherished establishment. Without the slightest evidence of agitation, he laid the telegram upon his desk and finished his speech. When he went next day to New York he saw only a pile of black, smouldering ruins."

The fire probably originated in the engine-room, where steam was constantly kept up to pump fresh air into the water of the aquaria and to propel the immense fans for cooling the atmosphere of the halls.

All the New York journals, and many more in other cities, editorially expressed their sympathy with my misfortune, and their sense of the loss the community had sustained in the destruction of the American Museum.

My insurance was but \$40,000, while the collection, at the



lowest estimate, was worth \$400,000, and as my premium was five per cent., I had paid the insurance companies more than they returned to me. When the fire occurred, my summer pantomime season had just begun, and the Museum was doing an immensely profitable business. My first impulse, after reckoning up my losses, was to retire from active life and from all business occupation beyond what my large real estate interests in Bridgeport and my property in New York would compel. I felt that I had still a competence, and that after a most active and busy life, at fifty-five years, I was entitled to retirement, to comparative rest for the remainder of my days. I called on my old friend, Horace Greeley, the editor of the *Tribune*, for advice on the subject.

"Accept this fire as a notice to quit, and go a-fishing," said Mr. Greeley.

"A-fishing," I exclaimed.

"Yes, a-fishing; I have been wanting to go a-fishing for thirty years, and have not yet found time to do so," replied Mr. Greeley.

I really felt that this advice was good and wise, and had I consulted only my own ease and interest I should have acted upon it. But two considerations moved me to pause: First, one hundred and fifty employés, many of whom depended upon their exertions for their daily bread, were thrown out of work at a season when it would be difficult for them to get engagements elsewhere. Second, I felt that a large city like New York needed a good Museum, and that my experience of a quarter of a century in that direction afforded extraordinary facilities for founding another establishment of the kind, and so I took a few days for reflection.

As the session drew near its close, the railroad controversy culminated by my introduction of a bill to amend the act for the regulation of railroads by the interpolation of the following:

"SECTION 508. No railway company, which has had a system of commutation fares in force for more than four years, shall abolish, alter, or modify the same, except for the regulation of the price charged for such commutation; and such price shall, in no case, be raised to an extent that shall alter the ratio between such commutation and the rates then charged for way fare, on the railroad of such company."



The bill as amended was carried. It is now an act in the statute book of the State, and it annually adds many dollars to the assessment roll of Connecticut, since the protection afforded to commuters against the extortions practised by railway companies elsewhere is a strong inducement to permanent settlers along the lines of Connecticut railways.\*

In the spring of 1866, I was again elected to represent the town of Fairfield in the Connecticut Legislature, and was again Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture.

During the summer, Governor Hawley appointed me a commissioner to the Paris Exposition, but I was unable to attend.

In the spring of 1867, I received from the Republican convention in the Fourth District in Connecticut, the nomination for Congress. As I have already remarked, politics were always distasteful to me, but my warmest personal friends, insisted that a nomination to so high and honourable a position as a member of Congress, was not to be lightly rejected, and so I consented to run. Fairfield and Litchfield counties composed the district, which, in the preceding Congressional election, in 1865, and just after the close of the war, was Republican. In the year following, however, the district in State election went Democratic. I had this Democratic majority to contend against in 1867, and as the whole State turned over and elected the Democratic ticket, I lost my election.

During the summer of 1866, Mr. Edwin L. Brown, Corresponding Secretary of the "Associated Western Literary Societies," opened a correspondence with me relative to delivering, in the ensuing season, my lecture on "Success in Life," before some sixty lyceums, Young Men's Christian Associations, and Literary Societies belonging to the union which Mr. Brown represented. The scheme embraced an extended tour through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri and Iowa.

\* The New York and New Haven Railroad Company never forgave me for thus securing a righteous law for the protection of its commuters. Even as lately as 1871, the vendors of books on the trains were prohibited from selling to passengers my autobiography which exposed their cupidity. A parallel railroad from New York to New Haven would be good paying stock, and would materially disturb, if not destroy, the present railroad and express monopolies.



On my tour, in attempting to make the connection from Cleveland, Ohio, to Fort Wayne, Indiana, via Toledo, I arrived at the latter city at one o'clock p.m., which was about two hours too late to catch the train in time for the hour announced for my lecture that evening. I went to Mr. Andrews, the superintendent of the Toledo, Wabash, and Western Railway, and told him I wanted to hire a locomotive and car to run to Fort Wayne, as I must be there at eight o'clock that night.

"It is an impossibility," said Mr. Andrews; "the distance is ninety-four miles, and no train leaves here till morning. The road is much occupied by freight trains, and we never run extra trains in this part of the country, unless the necessity is imperative."

I suppose I looked astonished as well as chagrined. I knew that if I missed lecturing in Fort Wayne that evening, I could not appoint another time for that purpose, for every night was engaged during the next two months. I also felt that a large number of persons at Fort Wayne would be disappointed, and I grew desperate. Drawing my wallet from my pocket, I said :

"I will give two hundred dollars, and even more, if you say so, to be put into Fort Wayne before eight o'clock to-night ; and, really I hope you will accommodate me."

The superintendent looked me thoroughly over in half a minute, and I fancied he had come to the conclusion that I was a burglar, a counterfeiter, or something worse, fleeing from justice. My surmise was confirmed, when he slowly remarked :

"Your business must be very pressing, sir."

"It is indeed," I replied ; "I am Barnum, the Museum man, and am engaged to speak in Fort Wayne to-night."

He evidently did not catch the whole of my response, for he immediately said :

"Oh, it is a show, eh ? Where is old Barnum himself ?"

"I am Barnum," I replied, "and it is a lecture which I am advertised to give to-night ; and I would not disappoint the people for anything."



"Is this P. T. Barnum?" said the superintendent, starting to his feet.

"I am sorry to say it is," I replied.

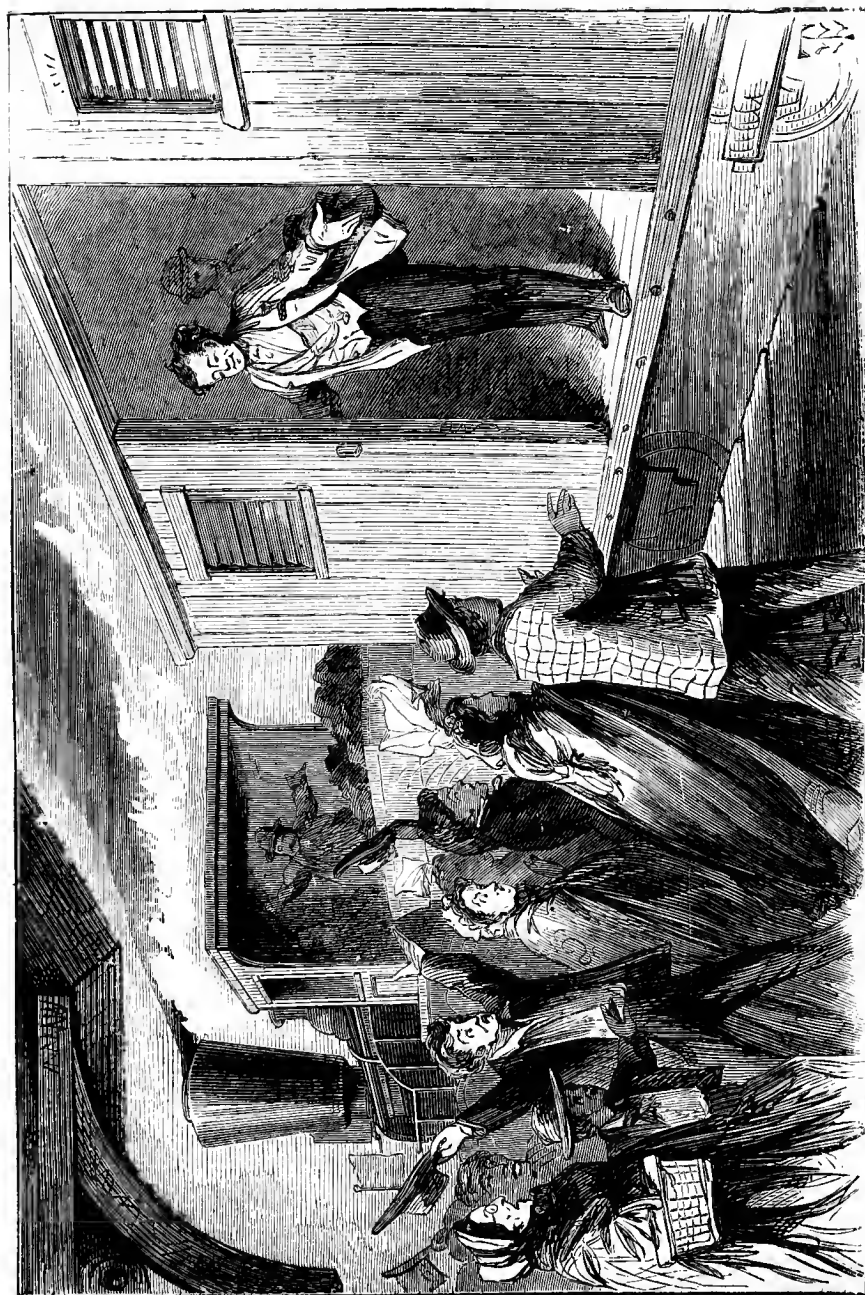
"Well, Mr. Barnum," said he earnestly, "if you can stand it to ride to Fort Wayne in the caboose of a freight train, your well established reputation for punctuality in keeping your engagements shall not suffer on account of the Toledo, Wabash and Western Railroad."

"Caboose!" said I, with a laugh, "I would ride to Fort Wayne astride of the engine, or boxed up and stowed away in a freight car, if necessary, in order to meet my engagement."

A freight train was on the point of starting for Fort Wayne; all the cars were at once ordered to be switched off, except two, which the superintendent said were necessary to balance the train; the freight trains on the road were telegraphed to clear the track, and the polite superintendent, pointing to the caboose, invited me to step in. I drew out my pocket-book to pay, but he smilingly shook his head, and said: "You have a through ticket from Cleveland to Fort Wayne; hand it to the freight agent on your arrival, and all will be right."

The excited state of mind which I had suffered while under the impression that the audience in Fort Wayne must be disappointed, now changed, and I felt as happy as a king. In fact, I enjoyed a new sensation of imperial superiority, in that I was "monarch of all I surveyed," emperor of my own train, switching all other trains from the main track, and making conductors all along the line wonder what grand mogul had thus taken complete possession and control of the road. Indeed, as we sped past each train, which stood quietly on a side track waiting for us to pass, I could not help smiling at the glances of excited curiosity which were thrown into our car by the agent and brakeman of the train which had been so peremptorily ordered to clear the track; and always stepping to the caboose door, I raised my hat, receiving in return an almost reverent salute, which the occupants of the waiting train thought due, no doubt to the distinguished person for whom they were ordered by special telegram to make way.





THE GREAT UNKNOWN.



I now began to reflect that the Fort Wayne lecture committee, upon discovering that I did not arrive by the regular passenger train, would not expect me at all, and that probably they might issue small bills announcing my failure to arrive. I therefore prepared the following telegram, which I despatched to them on our arrival at Napoleon, the first station at which we stopped :

“Lecture Committee, Fort Wayne.—Rest perfectly tranquil. I am to be delivered at Fort Wayne by contract by half-seven o'clock—special train.”

At the same station I received a telegram from Mr. Andrews, the superintendent, asking me how I liked the caboose. I replied :

“The springs of the caboose are softer than down ; I am as happy as a clam at high water ; I am being carried towards Fort Wayne in a style never surpassed by Cæsar’s triumphal march into Rome. Hurrah for the Toledo and Wabash Railroad !”

The managers of the railroads running west from Chicago, pretty rigidly enforce a rule excluding from certain reserved cars all gentlemen travelling without ladies. As I do not smoke I avoided the smoking cars ; and as the ladies’ car was sometimes more select and always more comfortable than the other cars, I tried various expedients to smuggle myself in. If I saw a lady about to enter the car alone, I followed closely, hoping thus to elude the vigilance of the brakeman, who generally acts as door-keeper. But the car Cerberus is pretty well up to all such dodges, and I did not always succeed. On one occasion, seeing a young couple, evidently just married, and starting on a bridal tour, about to enter the car, I followed closely, but was stopped by the door-keeper, who called out :

“How many gentlemen are with this lady ?”

I have always noticed that young, newly-married people, are very fond of saying “my husband” and “my wife ;” they are new terms which sound pleasantly to the ears of those who utter them ; so, in answer to the peremptory inquiry of the door-keeper, the bridegroom promptly responded :

“I am this lady’s husband.”



"And I guess you can see by the resemblance between the lady and myself," said I to Cerberus, "that I am her father."

The astonished husband and the blushing bride were too much "taken aback" to deny their newly-discovered parent, but the brakeman said, as he permitted the young couple to pass into the car:

"We can't pass all creation with one lady."

"I hope you will not deprive me of the company of my child during the little time we can remain together," I said, with a demure countenance. The brakeman evidently sympathised with the fond "parent," whose feelings were sufficiently lacerated at losing his daughter, through her finding a husband, and I was permitted to pass. I immediately apologised to the young bride and her husband, and told them who I was, and my reasons for the assumed paternity, and they enjoyed the joke so heartily that they called me "father" during our entire journey together. Indeed, the husband privately and slyly hinted to me that the first boy should be christened "P. T."

Public lecturing was by no means a new experience with me; for, apart from my labours in that direction in England, and occasional addresses before literary and agricultural associations at home, I had been prominently in the field for many years, as a lecturer on temperance. My attention was turned to this subject in the following manner:

In the fall of 1847, while exhibiting General Tom Thumb at Saratoga Springs, where the New York State Fair was then being held, I saw so much intoxication among men of wealth and intellect, filling the highest positions in society, that I began to ask myself the question: What guarantee is there that *I* may not become a drunkard? and I forthwith pledged myself at that time never again to partake of any kind of spirituous liquors as a beverage. True, I continued to partake of wine, for I had been instructed, in my European tour, that this was one of the innocent and charming indispensables of life. I however regarded myself as a good temperance man, and soon began to persuade my friends to refrain from the intoxicating cup. Seeing need of reform in



Bridgeport, I invited my friend, the late Rev. Dr. E. H. Chapin, to visit us, for the purpose of giving a public temperance lecture. I had never heard him on that subject, but I knew that on whatever topic he spoke, he was as logical as he was eloquent.

He lectured in the Baptist church in Bridgeport. His subject was presented in three divisions: the liquor-seller, the moderate drinker, and the indifferent man. It happened, therefore, that the second, if not the third, clause of the subject, had a special bearing upon me and my position. The eloquent gentleman overwhelmingly proved that the so-called respectable liquor-seller, in his splendid saloon or hotel bar, and who sold only to "gentlemen," inflicted much greater injury upon the community than a dozen common grogeries—which he abundantly illustrated. He then took up the "moderate drinker," and urged that he was the great stumbling-block to the temperance reform. He it was, and not the drunkard in the ditch, that the young man looked at as an example when he takes his first glass. That when the drunkard was asked to sign the pledge, he would reply, "Why should I do so? What harm can there be in drinking, when such men as respectable Mr. A, and moral Mr. B. drink wine under their own roof?" He urged that the higher a man stood in the community, the greater was his influence either for good or for evil. He said to the moderate drinker: "Sir, you either do or you do not consider it a privation and a sacrifice to give up drinking. Which is it? If you say you can drink or let it alone, that you can quit it for ever without considering it a self-denial, then I appeal to you as a man, to do it for the sake of your suffering fellow-beings." He further argued that if it *was* a self-denial to give up wine-drinking, then certainly the man should stop, for he was in danger of becoming a drunkard.

What Dr. Chapin said produced a deep impression upon my mind, and, after a night of anxious thought, I rose in the morning, took my champagne bottles, knocked off their heads, and poured their contents upon the ground. I then called upon Dr. Chapin, asked him for the teetotal pledge, and signed it. He was greatly surprised in discovering that I was



not already a teetotaler. He supposed such was the case, from the fact that I had invited him to lecture, and he little thought, at the time of his delivering it, that his argument to the moderate drinkers was at all applicable to me. I felt that I had now a duty to perform—to save others, as I had been saved, and on the very morning when I signed the pledge, I obtained over twenty signatures in Bridgeport. I talked temperance to all whom I met, and very soon commenced lecturing upon the subject in the adjacent towns and villages. I spent the entire winter and spring of 1851-2 in lecturing free through my native State, always travelling at my own expense, and I was glad to know that I aroused many hundreds, perhaps thousands to the importance of the temperance reform. I also lectured frequently in the cities of New York and Philadelphia, as well as in other towns in the neighbouring States.

While in Boston with Jenny Lind, I was earnestly solicited to deliver two temperance lectures in the Tremont Temple, where she gave her concerts. I did so; and though an admission fee was charged for the benefit of a benevolent society, the building on each occasion was crowded. In the course of my tour with Jenny Lind, I was frequently solicited to lecture on temperance on evenings when she did not sing. I always complied when it was in my power. In this way I lectured in Baltimore, Washington, Charleston, New Orleans, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and other cities, also in the ladies' saloon of the steamer *Lexington*, on Sunday morning. In August, 1853, I lectured in Cleveland, Ohio, and several other towns, and afterwards in Chicago, Illinois, and in Kenosha, Wisconsin. An election was to be held in Wisconsin in October, and the friends of prohibition in that State solicited my services for the ensuing month, and I could not refuse them. I therefore hastened home to transact some business which required my presence for a few days, and then returned and lectured on my way in Toledo, Norwalk, Ohio, and Chicago, Illinois. I made the tour of the State of Wisconsin, delivering two free lectures per day, four consecutive weeks, to crowded and attentive audiences.

My lecture in New Orleans, when I was in that city, was in



the great Lyceum Hall, in St. Charles Street, and I lectured by the invitation of Mayor Crossman, and several other influential gentlemen. The immense hall contained more than three thousand auditors, including the most respectable portion of the New Orleans public. I was in capital humour, feeling that the audience was with me. While in the midst of an argument illustrating the poisonous and destructive nature of alcohol to the animal economy, some opponent called out, "How does it affect us, externally or internally?"

"E-ternally," I replied.

I have scarcely ever heard more tremendous merriment than that which followed this reply, and the applause was so prolonged that it was some minutes before I could proceed.

On the first evening when I lectured in Cleveland, Ohio (it was in the Baptist church), I commenced in this wise: "If there are any ladies or gentlemen present who have never suffered in consequence of the use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, either directly or in the person of a dear relative or friend, I will thank them to rise." A man with a tolerably glowing countenance arose. "Had you never a friend who was intemperate?" I asked.

"Never!" was the positive reply.

A giggle ran through the opposition portion of the audience. "Really, my friends," I said, "I feel constrained to make a proposition which I did not anticipate. I am, as you are all aware, a showman, and I am always on the look-out for curiosities. This gentleman is a stranger to me; but if he will satisfy me to-morrow morning that he is a man of credibility, and that no friend of his was ever intemperate, I will be glad to engage him for ten weeks at \$200 dollars per week, to exhibit him in my American Museum in New York as the greatest curiosity in this country."

A laugh that was a laugh followed this announcement.

"They may laugh, but it is a fact," persisted my opponent, with a look of dogged tenacity.

"The gentleman still insists that it is a fact," I replied. "I would like, therefore, to make one simple qualification to my offer; I made it on the supposition that, at some period



of his life he had friends. Now, if he never had any friends, I withdraw my offer; otherwise, I will stick to it."

This, and the shout of laughter that ensued, was too much for the gentleman, and he sat down. I noticed throughout my speech that he paid strict attention, and frequently indulged in a hearty laugh. At the close of the lecture he approached me, and, extending his hand, which I readily accepted, he said: "I was particularly green in rising to-night. Having once stood up, I was determined not to be put down, but your last remark fixed me!" He then complimented me very highly on the reasonableness of my arguments, and declared that ever afterwards he would be found on the side of temperance.

I have lectured in Montreal, Canada, and many towns and cities in the United States, at my own expense. One of the greatest consolations I now enjoy is that of believing I have carried happiness to the bosom of many a family. In the course of my life I have written much for newspapers, on various subjects, and always with earnestness, but in none of these have I felt so deep an interest as in that of the temperance reform. Were it not for this fact, I should be reluctant to mention that, besides numerous articles for the daily and weekly press, I wrote a little tract on "The Liquor Business," which expresses my practical view of the use and traffic in intoxicating drinks. In every one of my temperance lectures since the beginning of the year 1869, I have regularly read the following report, made by Mr. T. T. Cortis, Overseer of the Poor in Vineland, New Jersey:

"Though we have a population of 10,000 people, for the period of six months no settler or citizen of Vineland has required relief at my hands as overseer of the poor. Within seventy days there has only been one case among what we call the floating population, at the expense of four dollars. During the entire year there has been but one indictment, and that a trifling case of assault and battery, among our coloured population. So few are the fires in Vineland that we have no need of a fire department. There has only been one house burnt down in a year, and two slight fires, which were soon put out. We practically have no debt, and our



taxes are only one per cent. on the valuation. The police expenses of Vineland amount to seventy-five dollars per year, the sum paid to me; and our poor expenses a mere trifle. I ascribe this remarkable state of things, so nearly approaching the golden age, to the industry of our people and the absence of King Alcohol. Let me give you, in contrast to this, the state of things in the town from which I came, in New England. The population of the town was 9,500—a little less than that of Vineland. It maintained forty liquor shops. These kept busy a police judge, city marshal, assistant marshal, four night watchmen, six policemen. Fires were almost continual. That small place maintained a paid fire department of four companies of forty men each, at an expense of \$3,000 per annum. I belonged to this department for six years, and the fires averaged about one every two weeks, and mostly incendiary. The support of the poor cost \$2,500 per annum. The debt of the township was \$120,000. The condition of things in this New England town is as favourable in that county as that of many other places where liquor is sold."

It seems to me that there is an amount of overwhelming testimony and unanswerable argument in this one brief extract that makes it in itself one of the most perfect and powerful temperance lectures ever written.

Meanwhile, immense additions were made to the curiosity departments of the new Museum. Every penny of the profits of this Museum, and of the two immense travelling menageries of wild animals, was expended in procuring additional attractions for our patrons. Among other valuable novelties introduced in this establishment was the famous collection made by the renowned lion-slayer, Gordon Cummings.

Anxious to gather curiosities from every quarter of the globe, I sent Mr. John Greenwood, junior (who went for me to the Isle of Cyprus and to Constantinople, in 1864), on the *Quaker City* excursion, which left New York on June 8, 1867, and returned in the following November. During his absence Mr. Greenwood travelled 17,735 miles, and brought back several interesting relics from the Holy Land, which were duly deposited in the Museum.

Very soon after entering upon the premises, I built a new



and larger lecture-room, which was one of the most commodious and complete theatres in New York, and I largely increased the dramatic company. Our collection swelled so rapidly that we were obliged to extend our premises by the addition of another building, forty by one hundred feet, adjoining the Museum. This addition gave us several new halls, which were speedily filled with curiosities.

The winter of 1867-68 was one of the coldest that had been known for years, and some thirty severe snow-storms occurred during the season. On Tuesday morning, March 3, 1868, it was bitterly cold. A heavy body of snow was on the ground, and, as I sat at the breakfast-table with my wife and an esteemed lady guest, the wife of my excellent friend, Rev. A. C. Thomas, I read aloud the general news from the morning papers. Leisurely turning to the local columns, I said, "Hallo! Barnum's Museum is burned."

"Yes," said my wife, with an incredulous smile, "I suspect it is."

"It is a fact," said I; "just listen: 'Barnum's Museum totally destroyed by fire.'"

This was read so coolly, and I showed so little excitement, that both of the ladies supposed I was joking. My wife simply remarked:

"Yes, it was totally destroyed two years ago, but Barnum built another one."

"Yes, and that is burned," I replied; "now listen," and I proceeded very calmly to read the account of the fire. Mrs. Thomas still believing, from my manner, that it was a joke, stole slyly behind my chair, and looking over my shoulder at the newspaper, she exclaimed:

"Why, Mrs. Barnum, the Museum is really burned. Here is the whole account of it in this morning's paper."

"Of course it is," I remarked, with a smile; "how could you think I could joke on such a serious subject!"

The papers of the following morning contained full accounts of the fire; and editorial writers, while manifesting much sympathy for the proprietors, also expressed profound regret that so magnificent a collection, especially in the zoological department, should be lost to the city.



The cold was so intense that the water froze almost as soon as it left the hose of the fire engines; and when at last everything was destroyed, except the front granite wall of the Museum building, that and the ladder, signs, and lamp posts in front, were covered in a gorgeous framework of transparent ice, which made it altogether one of the most picturesque scenes imaginable. Thousands of persons congregated daily in that locality in order to get a view of the magnificent ruins. By moonlight, the ice-coated ruins were still more sublime; and for many days and nights the old Museum was "the observed of all observers," and photographs were taken by several artists.

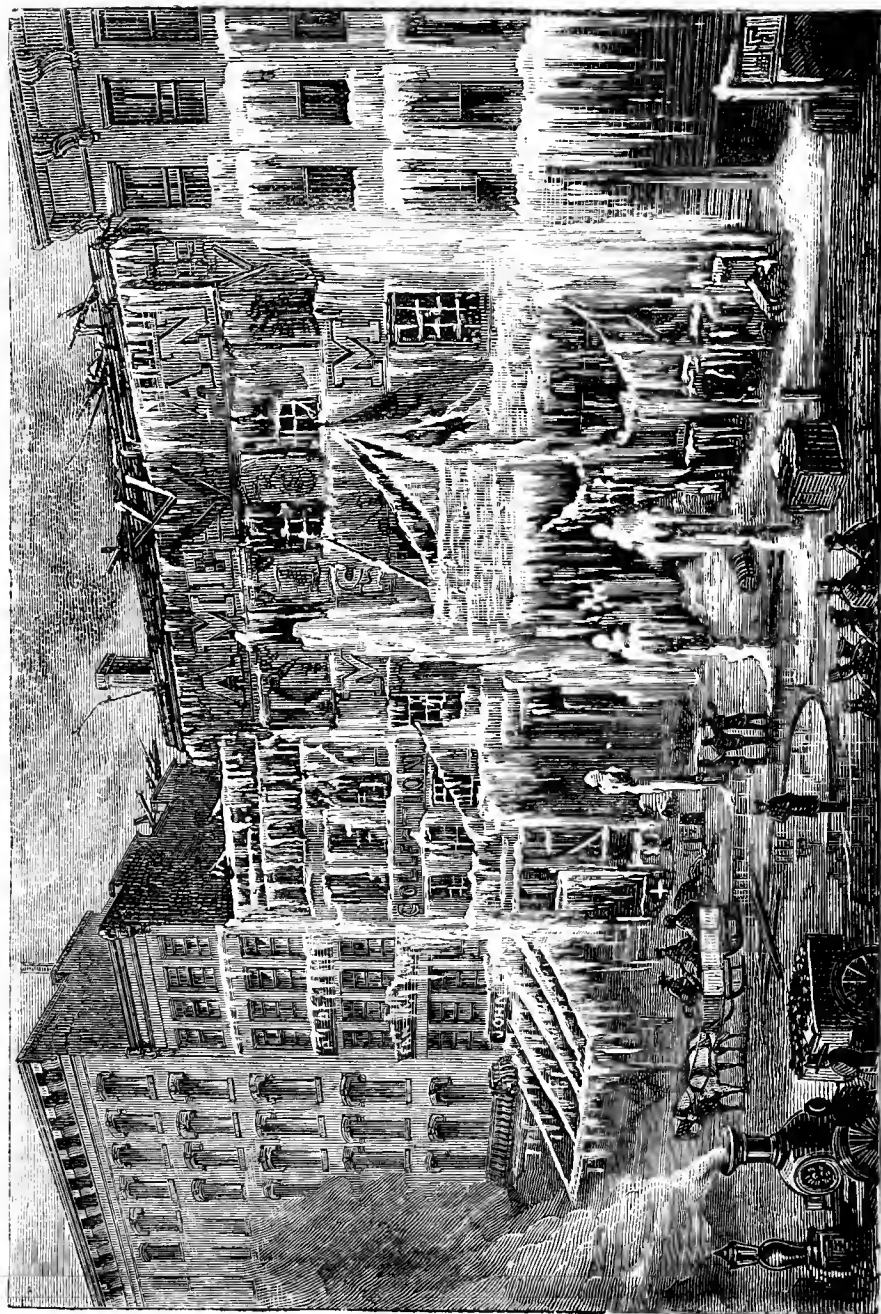
When the Museum was burnt, I was nearly ready to bring out a new spectacle, for which a very large, extra company had been engaged, and on which a considerable sum of money had been expended in scenery, properties, costumes, and especially in enlarging the stage. I had expended altogether some \$78,000 in building the new lecture-room, and in refitting the saloons. The curiosities were inventoried by the manager, Mr. Ferguson, at \$288,000. I bought the real estate only a little while before the fire, for \$460,000, and there was an insurance on the whole of \$160,000; and in June, 1868, I sold the lots on which the building stood, for \$432,000. The cause of the fire was a defective flue in the restaurant in the basement of the building.

Thus, by the destruction of Iranistan and two Museums, about a million of dollars' worth of my property had been destroyed by fire, and I was not now long in making up my mind to follow Mr. Greeley's advice on a former occasion, to "take this fire as a notice to quit, and go a-fishing."

In the summer of 1868, I paid my third visit to the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

At the Profile House, near the Notch, in the Franconia range, I met many acquaintances, some of whom had been there with their families for several weeks. When tired of scenery-hunting and hill-climbing, and thrown entirely upon their own resources, they had invented a "sell" which they perpetrated upon every new-comer. Naturally enough, as I was considered a capital subject for their fun, before I had





AFTER THE FIRE.



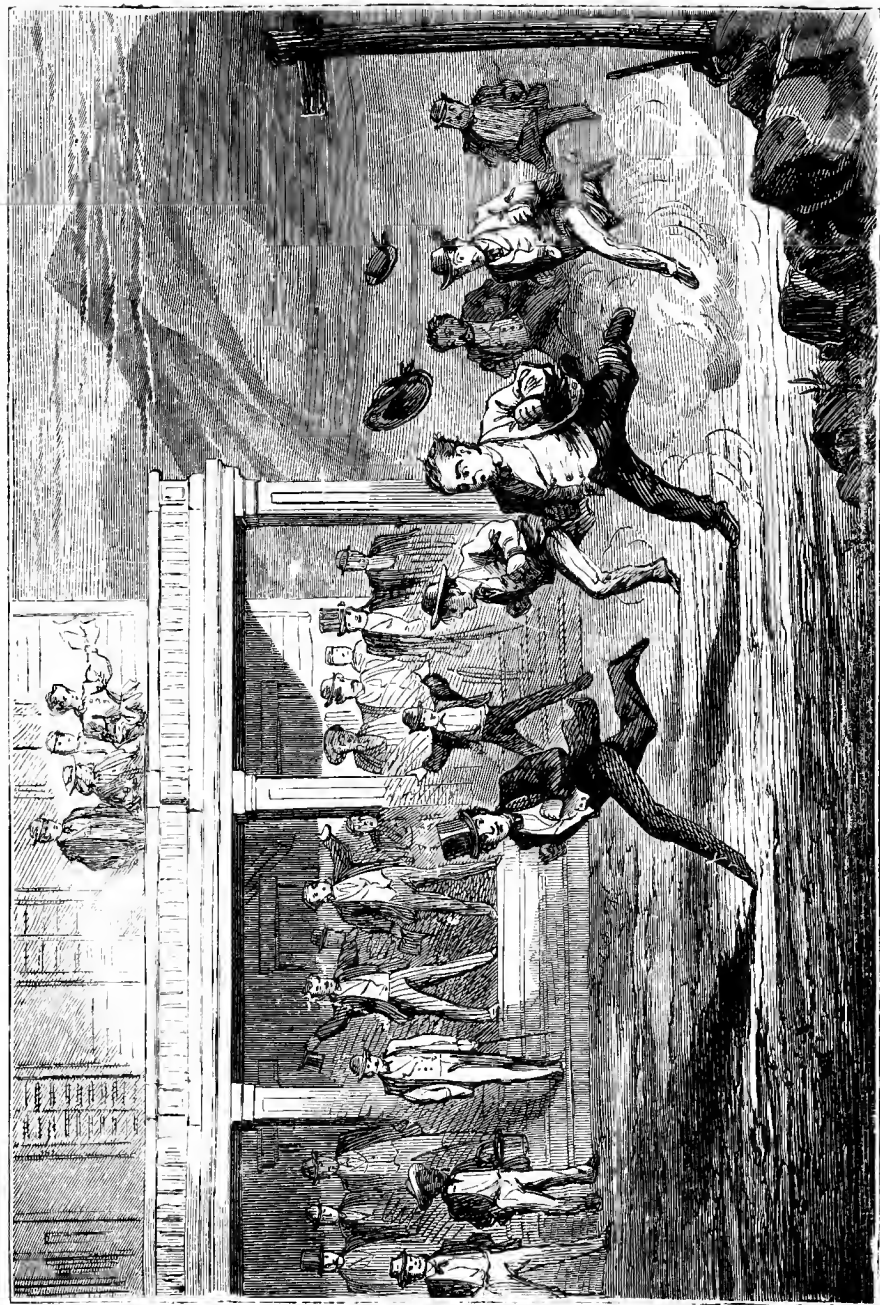
been there half an hour they had made all the arrangements to take me in. The "sell" consisted in getting up a foot-race in which all were to join, and at the word "go" the contestants were to start and run across the open space in front of the hotel to a fence opposite, while the last man who should touch the rail must treat the crowd. Of course, no one touched the rail at all, except the victim. I suspected no trick, but tried to avoid the race, urging in excuse, that I was too old, too corpulent, and, besides, as they knew, I was a teetotaller and would not drink their liquor.

"Oh, drink lemonade, if you like," they said, "but no backing out; and as for corpulence, here is Stephen, our old stage-driver, who weighs three hundred, and he shall run with the rest."

And, in good truth, Stephen, in a warm day especially, would be likely to "run" with the best of them; but I did not know then that Stephen was the stool-pigeon whom they kept to entrap unwary and verdant youths like myself; so, looking at his portly form, I at once agreed that if Stephen ran I would, as I knew that, for a stout man, I was pretty quick on my feet. Accordingly at the word "Go," I started and ran as if the traditional enemy of mankind were in me or after me, but, before I had accomplished half the distance, I wondered why at least one or two of the crowd had not outstripped me, for, in fact, Stephen was the only one whom I expected to beat. Looking back and at once comprehending the "sell," I decided not to be sold. A correspondent of the *New York Sun* told how I escaped the trick and the penalty, and how I subsequently paid off the tricksters, in a letter from which I quote the following:

"Barnum threw up his hands before arriving at the railing, and did not touch it at all! It was acknowledged on all sides that the biters were bit." "But you ran well," said those who intended the sell." "Yes," replied Barnum, in high glee, "I ran better than I did for Congress, but I was not green enough to touch the rail!" Of course a roar of laughter followed, and the "sellers" resolved to try the game the next morning on some other new-comer, but their luck had evidently deserted them, for the next man also "smelt a rat," and, holding up his hands, refused to touch the rail. The two successive failures damped the ardour of the "sellers," and they relinquished that trick as a bad job. But the way Barnum





BARNUM FIVE SECONDS AHEAD.



sold nearly the whole crowd of 'sellers,' in detail, on the following afternoon, by the old 'sliver trick,' was a caution to sore sides. So much laughing in one day was probably never before done in that locality. One after another succeeded in extracting from the palm of Barnum's hand what each at first supposed was a tormenting 'sliver,' but which turned out to be a 'broom splinter,' a foot long, which was hidden up B.'s sleeve, except the small point which appeared from under the end of his thumb, apparently protruding from under the skin of his palm. One 'weak brother' nearly fainted as he saw come forth some twelve inches of what he first supposed was a 'sliver,' but which he was now thoroughly convinced was one of the nerves from Barnum's arm. Mr. O'Brien, the Wall Street banker, was the first victim. When asked what he thought upon seeing such a long 'sliver' coming from Barnum's hand, he solemnly replied, 'I thought he was a dead man!' It was acknowledged by all that Barnum gave them a world of 'fun,' and that he and his friends left the Profile House with flying colours."



## CHAPTER XXXI.

## CURIOUS COINCIDENCES—NUMBER THIRTEEN.

IN the summer of 1868, a lady, who happened to be at that time an inmate of my family, upon hearing me say that I supposed we must remove into our summer residence on Thursday, because our servants might not like to go on Friday, remarked :

“What nonsense that is ! It is astonishing that some persons are so foolish as to think there is any difference in the days. I call it rank heathenism to be so superstitious as to think one day is lucky and another unlucky ;” and then, in the most innocent manner possible, she added : “I would not like to remove on a Saturday myself, for they say people who remove on the last day of the week don’t stay long.”

Of course, this was too refreshing a case of undoubted superstition to be permitted to pass without a hearty laugh from all who heard it.

I suppose most of us have certain superstitions, imbibed in our youth, and still lurking more or less faintly in our minds. Many would not like to acknowledge that they had any choice whether they commenced a new enterprise on a Friday, or on a Monday, or whether they first saw the new moon over the right or left shoulder. And yet, perhaps a large portion of these same persons will be apt to observe it when they happen to do anything which popular superstition calls “unlucky.” It is a common occurrence with many to immediately make a secret “wish” if they happen to use the same expression at the same moment when a friend with whom they are conversing makes it ; nevertheless, these persons would protest against being considered superstitious—indeed, probably they are not so in the full meaning of the word.

Several years ago, an old lady, who was a guest at my house, remarked on a rainy Sunday :

“This is the first Sunday in the month, and now it will



rain every Sunday in the month ; that is a sign which never fails, for I have noticed it many a time."

" Well," I remarked, smiling, " watch closely this time, and if it rains on the next three Sundays, I will give you a new silk dress."

She was in high glee, and replied :

" Well, you have lost that dress sure as you are born."

The following Sunday it did, indeed, rain.

" Ah ! ah !" exclaimed the old lady, " what did I tell you ? I knew it would rain."

I smiled, and said, " All right ; watch for next Sunday."

And surely enough the next Sunday it did rain, harder than on either of the preceding Sundays.

" Now what do you think ? " said the old lady, solemnly. " I tell you that sign never fails. It won't do to doubt the ways of Providence," she added, with a sigh, " for His ways are mysterious and past finding out."

The following Sunday, the sun rose in a cloudless sky, and not the slightest appearance of rain was manifested through the day. The old lady was greatly disappointed, and did not like to hear any allusion to the subject ; but two years afterwards, when she was once more my guest, it again happened to rain on the first Sunday in the month, and I heard her solemnly predict that it would every succeeding Sunday in the month, " for," she remarked, " it is a sign that never fails." She had forgotten the failure of two years before ; indeed, the continuance and prevalence of many popular superstitions is due to the fact that we notice the " sign " when it happens to be verified, and do not observe it, or we forget it, when it fails. Many persons are exceedingly superstitious in regard to the number " thirteen." This is particularly the case, I have noticed, in Catholic countries I have visited, and I have been told that superstition originated in the fact of a thirteenth apostle having been chosen on account of the treachery of Judas. At any rate, I have known numbers of French persons who had quite a horror of this fatal number. Once I knew a French lady, who had taken passage in an ocean steamer, and who on going aboard, and finding her assigned state-room to be " No. 13," insisted



upon it that she would not sail in the ship at all; she had rather forfeit her passage money, though, finally, she was persuaded to take another room. And a great many people, French, English and American, will not undertake any important enterprise on the thirteenth day of the month, nor sit at table with a full complement of thirteen persons. With regard to this number, to which so many superstitions cling, I have some interesting experiences and curious coincidences, which are worth relating, as a part of my personal history.

When I was first in England with General Tom Thumb, I well remember dining one Christmas Day with my friends, the Brettells, in St. James's Palace, in London. Just before the dinner was finished (it is a wonder it was not noticed before) it was discovered that the number at table was exactly thirteen.

"How very unfortunate," remarked one of the guests; "I would not have dined under such circumstances for any consideration, had I known it!"

"Nor I either," seriously remarked another guest.

"Do you really suppose there is any truth in the old superstition on that subject?" I asked.

"Truth!" solemnly replied an old lady. "Truth! Why I myself have known three instances, and have heard of scores of others, where thirteen persons have eaten at the same table, and in every case one of the number died before the year was out!"

This assertion, made with so much earnestness, evidently affected several of the guests, whose nerves were easily excited. I can truthfully state, however, that I dined at the Palace again the following Christmas, and although there were seventeen persons present, every one of the original thirteen who dined there the preceding Christmas, was among this number, and all in good health; although, of course, it would have been nothing very remarkable if one had happened to have died during the last twelve months.

While I was on my Western lecturing tour in 1866, long before I got out of Illinois, I began to observe that at the various hotels where I stopped my room very frequently was number thirteen. Indeed, it seemed as if this number turned



up to me as often as four times per week, and so, before many days, I almost expected to have that number set down to my name wherever I signed it upon the register of the hotel. Still, I laughed to myself, at what I was convinced was simply a coincidence. On one occasion I was travelling from Clinton to Mount Vernon, Iowa, and was to lecture in the college of the latter place that evening. Ordinarily, I should have arrived at two o'clock P.M.; but owing to an accident which had occurred to the train from the West, the conductor informed me that our arrival in Mount Vernon would probably be delayed until after seven o'clock. I telegraphed that fact to the committee who were expecting me, and told them to be patient.

When we had arrived within ten miles of that town it was dark. I sat rather moodily in the car, wishing the train would "hurry up;" and happening for some cause to look back over my left shoulder, I discovered the new moon through the window. This omen struck me as a coincident addition to my ill-luck, and with a pleasant chuckle I muttered to myself, "Well, I hope I won't get room number thirteen to night, for that will be adding insult to injury."

I reached Mount Vernon a few minutes before eight, and was met at the depôt by the committee, who took me in a carriage and hurried to the Ballard House. The committee told me the hall in the college was already crowded, and they hoped I would defer taking tea until after the lecture. I informed them that I would gladly do so, but simply wished to run to my room a moment for a wash. While wiping my face I happened to think about the new room, and at once stepped outside of my bed-room door to look at the number. It was "number thirteen."

After the lecture I took tea, and I confess that I began to think "number thirteen" looked a little ominous. There I was, many hundreds of miles from my family; I left my wife sick, and I began to ask myself, Does "number thirteen" portend anything in particular? Without feeling willing even now to acknowledge that I felt much apprehension on the subject, I must say I began to take a serious view of things in general.



I mentioned the coincidence of my luck, in so often having "number thirteen" assigned to me, to Mr. Ballard, the proprietor of the hotel, giving him all the particulars to date.

"I will give you another room, if you prefer it," said Mr. Ballard.

"No, I thank you," I replied with a semi-serious smile; "if it is fatc, I will take it as it comes; and if it means anything, I shall probably find it out in time." That same night, before retiring to rest, I wrote a letter to the Rev. Abel C. Thomas, then residing in Bridgeport, telling him all my experiences in regard to "number thirteen." I said to him in closing: "Don't laugh at me for being superstitious, for I hardly feel so; I think it is simply a series of 'coincidences' which appear the more strange because I am sure to notice every one that occurs." Ten days afterward I received an answer from my reverend friend, in which he cheerfully said: "It's all right; go ahead and get 'number thirteen' as often as you can. It is a lucky number," and he added:

"Unbelieving and ungrateful man! What is thirteen but the traditional 'baker's' dozen, indicating 'good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over,' as illustrated in your triumphal lecturing tour? By all means insist upon having room number thirteen at every hotel; and if the guests at any meal be less than that charmed complement, send out and compel somebody to come in.

"What do you say respecting the Thirteen Colonies? Any ill-luck in the number? Was the patriarch Jacob afraid of it when he adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph, so as to complete the magic circle of thirteen?

"Do you not know that chapter thirteen of **First Corinthians** is the grandest in the Bible, with verse thirteen as the culmination of all religious thought? And can you read verse thirteen of the fifth chapter of Revelation without the highest rapture?"

But my clerical friend had not heard of a certain curious circumstance which occurred to me after I had mailed my letter to him and before I received his answer.

On leaving Mount Vernon for Cedar Rapids the next morning, the landlord, Mr. Ballard, drove me to the railroad



depôt. As I was stepping upon the cars, Mr. Ballard shook my hand, and with a laugh exclaimed: "Good-bye, friend Barnum, I hope you won't get room number thirteen at Cedar Rapids to-day." "I hope not," I replied, earnestly, and yet with a smile. I reached Cedar Rapids in an hour. The lecture committee met and took me to the hotel. I entered my name, and the landlord immediately called out to the porter:

"Here, John, take Mr. Barnum's baggage, and show him to 'number thirteen!'"

I confess that when I heard this I was startled. I remarked to the landlord that it was certainly very singular, but was nevertheless true, that "number thirteen" seemed to be about the only room I could get in a hotel.

"We have a large meeting of railroad directors here at present," he replied, "and 'number thirteen' is the only room unoccupied in my house."

I proceeded to the room, and immediately wrote to Mr. Ballard at Mount Vernon, assuring him that my letter was written in "number thirteen," and that this was the only room I could get in the hotel. During the remainder of my journey, I was put into "number thirteen" so often in the various hotels at which I stopped, that it came to be quite a matter of course, though occasionally I was fortunate enough to secure some other number. Upon returning to New York, I related the foregoing adventures to my family, and told them I was really half afraid of "number thirteen." Soon afterwards, I telegraphed to my daughter, who was boarding at the Atlantic House in Bridgeport, asking her to engage a room for me to lodge there the next night, on my way to Boston. "Mr. Hale," said she to the landlord, "father is coming up to-day; will you please reserve him a comfortable room?" "Certainly," replied Mr. Hale, and he instantly ordered a fire in "room thirteen!" I went to Boston, and proceeded to Lewiston, Maine, and thence to Lawrence, Massachusetts, and the hotel register there has my name booked for "number thirteen."

My experience with this number has by no means been confined to apartments. In 1867 a church in Bridgeport



wanted to raise several thousand dollars in order to get free from debt. I subscribed one thousand dollars, by aid of which they assured me they would certainly raise enough to pay off the debt. A few weeks subsequently, however, one of the "brethren" wrote me that they were still six hundred dollars short, with but little prospect of getting it. I replied that I would pay one-half of the sum required. The brother soon afterwards wrote me that he had obtained the other half, and I might forward him my subscription of "thirteen" hundred dollars. During the same season I attended a fair in Franklin Hall, Bridgeport, given by a temperance organisation. Two of my little grand-daughters accompanied me, and, telling them to select what articles they desired, I paid the bill, twelve dollars and fifty cents. Whereupon I said to the children, "I am glad you did not make it thirteen dollars, and I will expend no more here to-night." We sat awhile listening to the music, and finally started for home, and, as we were going, a lady at one of the stands near the door, called out: "Mr. Barnum, you have not patronised me. Please take a chance on my lottery." "Certainly," I replied; "give me a ticket." I paid her the price (fifty cents), and after I arrived home, I discovered that in spite of my expressed determination to the contrary, I had expended exactly "thirteen" dollars!

I invited a few friends to a "clam-bake" in the summer of 1868, and, being determined the party should not be thirteen, I invited fifteen, and they all agreed to go. Of course, one man and his wife were "disappointed," and could not go—and my party numbered thirteen. At Christmas in the same year, my children and grandchildren dined with me, and finding, on "counting noses," that they would number the inevitable thirteen, I expressly arranged to have a high chair placed at the table and my youngest grandchild, seventeen months old, was placed in it, so that we should number fourteen. After the dinner was over, we discovered that my son-in-law, Thompson, had been detained down town, and the number at dinner table, notwithstanding my extra precautions, was exactly thirteen.

Thirteen was certainly an ominous number to me in 1865, for on the thirteenth day of July, the American Museum was



burned to the ground, and the thirteenth day of November saw the opening of "Barnum's New American Museum," which was also subsequently destroyed by fire.

Having concluded this veritable history of superstitious coincidences in regard to thirteen, I read it to a clerical friend, who happened to be present; and after reading the manuscript, I paged it, when my friend and I were a little startled to find that the pages numbered exactly thirteen.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

## SEASIDE PARK AND WALDEMERE.

FROM the time when I first settled in Bridgeport, and turned my attention to opening and beautifying new avenues, and doing whatever lay in my power to extend and improve that charming city, I was exceedingly anxious that public parks should be established, especially one where good drive-ways, and an opportunity for the display of the many fine equipages for which Bridgeport is celebrated, could be afforded. W. H. Noble and I began the movement by presenting to the city the beautiful ground in East Bridgeport now known as Washington Park—a most attractive promenade and breathing-place, and a continual resort for citizens on both sides of the river, particularly in the summer evenings, when one of the city bands is an additional attraction to the pleasant spot.

Up to the year 1865, the shores of Bridgeport, west of the public wharves, and washed by the waters of Long Island Sound, were inaccessible to carriages, or even to horsemen, and almost impossible for pedestrianism. I was satisfied that a most lovely park and public drive might be, and ought to be opened along the whole water-front.

I enlisted the attention of several gentlemen, and persuaded them to walk with me over the ground, which to me seemed in every way practicable for a park. These gentlemen, who were men of taste, as well as of enterprise and public spirit, very soon coincided in my ideas as to the feasibility of the plan and the advantages of the site; and some of them went with me to talk with the landowners, adding their own pleas to the arguments I had already advanced. After much pressing and persuading, we got the terms upon which the proprietors would give a portion, and sell another portion of their land, which fronted on the water, provided the land thus disposed of should for ever be appropriated to the purposes of a public park. But, unfortunately, a part of the land it was



desirable to include was a small farm, of some thirty acres, then belonging to an unsettled estate, and neither the administrator nor the heirs could or would give away a rod of it. But the whole farm was for sale—and, to overcome the difficulty in the way of its transfer for the public benefit, I bought it for about \$12,000, and then presented the required front to the park. I did not want this land or any portion of it, for my own purposes or profit, and I offered a thousand dollars to any who would take my place in the transaction; but no one accepted, and I was quite willing to contribute so much of the land as was needed for so noble an object. Indeed, besides this, I gave \$1,400 towards purchasing other land and improving the park; and, after months of persistent and personal effort, I succeeded in raising, by private subscription, the sum necessary to secure the land needed. This was duly paid for, presented to and accepted by the city, and I had the pleasure of naming this new and great public improvement, "Seaside Park."

Thus was my long-cherished plan at length fulfilled; nor did my efforts end here, for I aided and advised in all important matters in the laying out and progress of the new park; and in July, 1869, I gave to the city several acres of land, worth, at the lowest valuation, \$5,000, which were added to and included in this public pleasure ground, and now make the west end of the park.

At the beginning, the park on paper and the park in reality were two quite different things. The inaccessibility of the site was remedied by approaches which permitted the hundreds of workmen to begin to grade the grounds, and to lay out the walks and drives. The rocks and boulders over which I had more than once attempted to make my way on foot and on horseback, were devoted to the building of a substantial sea wall.

Paths were opened, shade-trees were planted: and fortunately there was, in the very centre of the ground, a beautiful grove of full growth, which is one of the most attractive features of this now charming spot; and a broad and magnificent drive follows the curves of the shore and encircles the entire park. A large covered music-stand has been erected:





SEA SIDE PARK.



and on a rising piece of ground has been built a substantial Soldiers' Monument.

The branch horse railroad already reaches one of the main entrances, and brings down crowds of people every day and evening, and especially on the evenings in which the band plays. At such times the avenues are not only thronged with superb equipages and crowds of people, but the whole harbour is alive with row-boats, sail-boats, and yachts. The views on all sides are charming. In the rear is the city, with its roofs and spires; Black Rock and Stradford lights are in plain sight: to the eastward and southward stretches "Old Long Island's seagirt shore;" and between lies the broad expanse of the salt water, with its ever "fresh" breezes, and the perpetual panorama of sails and steamers. I do not believe that a million dollars, to-day, would compensate the city of Bridgeport for the loss of what is confessed to be the most delightful public pleasure-ground between New York and Boston.

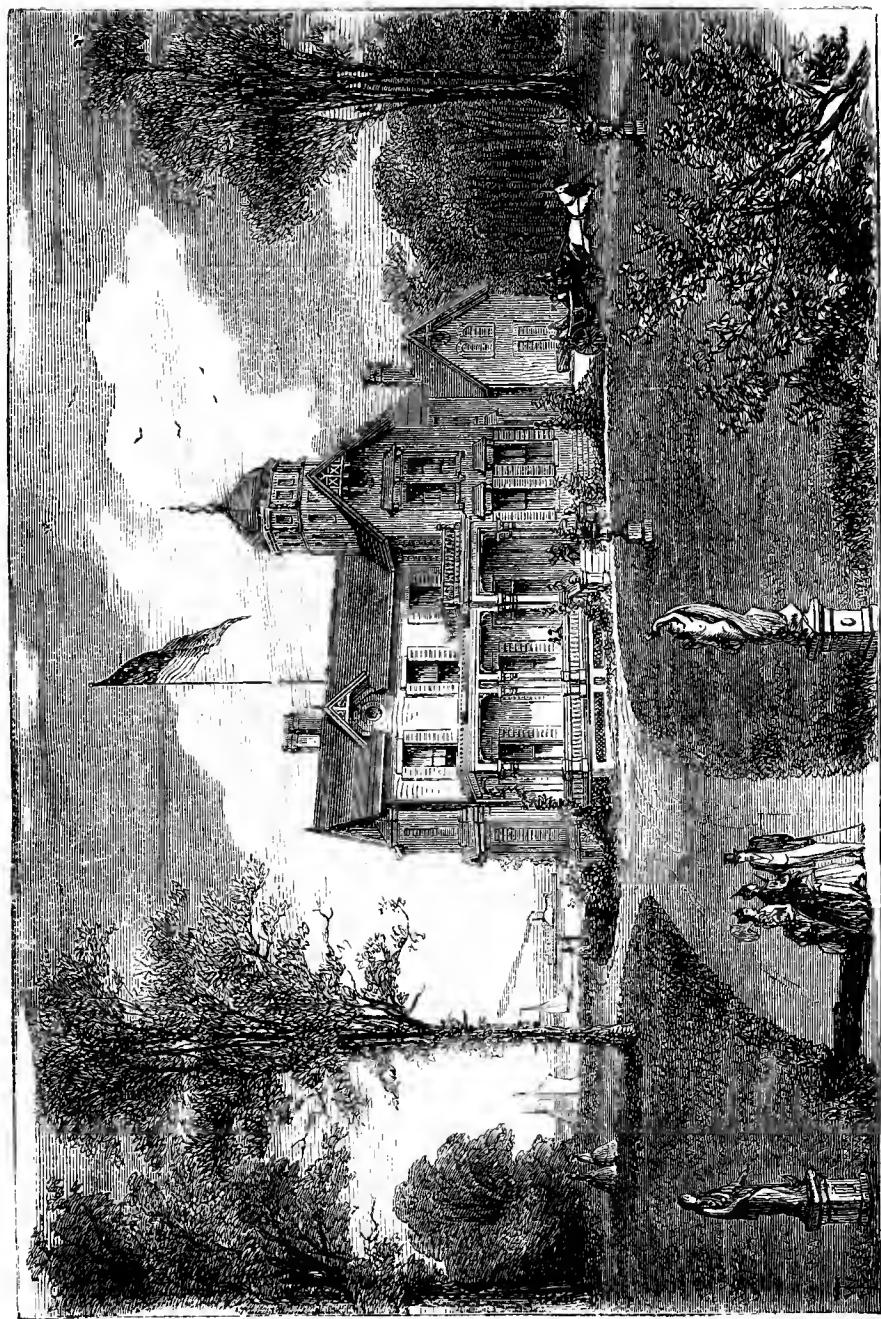
In the summer of 1867, the health of my wife continuing to decline, her physician directed that she should remove nearer to the sea-shore.

Lindercroft was sold on July 1, 1867, and we immediately removed for a summer's sojourn to a small farmhouse adjoining Seaside Park. During the hot days of the next three months we found the delightful sea-breeze so bracing and refreshing that the season passed like a happy dream, and we resolved that our future summers should be spent on the very shore of Long Island Sound.

Towards the end of the summer, I added my purchase to the farm, adjoining Seaside Park, a large and beautiful hickory grove, which seemed to be all that was needed to make the site exactly what I desired for a summer residence.

But there was a vast deal to do in grading and preparing the ground, in opening new streets and avenues as approaches to the property, and in setting out trees near the proposed site of the house; so that ground was not broken for the foundation till October. I planned a house which should combine the greatest convenience with the highest comfort, keeping in mind always that houses are made to live in as





THE "PETREL'S NEST"



well as to look at, and to be "homes" rather than mere residences. So the house was made to include abundant room for guests, with dressing-rooms and baths to every chamber; water from the city throughout the premises; gas, manufactured on my own ground; and that greatest of all comforts, a semi-detached kitchen, so that the smell as well as the secrets of the cuisine might be confined to its own locality. The stables and gardens were located far from the mansion, on the opposite side of one of the newly-opened avenues, so that in the immediate vicinity of the house, on either side and before both fronts, stretched large lawns, broken only by the grove, single-shade trees, rock-work, walks, flower-beds and drives. The whole scheme as planned was faithfully carried out in less than eight months.

When we moved into this new residence, we formally christened the place "Waldemere"—"Woods-by-the-Sea."

On the same estate, and fronting the new avenue I opened between my own property and the public park, I built at the same time two beautiful cottages, one of which is known as the "Petrel's Nest," and the other occupied by my eldest daughter, Mrs. Thompson, and my youngest daughter, Mrs. Seeley, as a summer residence, is called "Wavewood."

Having made up my mind to spend seven months of every year in New York city, in the summer of 1867 I purchased the elegant and most eligibly situated mansion, No. 438, Fifth Avenue, corner of Thirty-ninth Street, at the crowning point of Murray Hill, in New York, and moved into it in November.



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## REST ONLY FOUND IN ACTION.

AFTER the destruction by fire of my Museum, March 3rd. 1868, I retired from business, not knowing how utterly fruitless it is to attempt to chain down energies peculiar to my nature. No man not similarly situated can imagine the *ennui* which seizes such a nature after it has lain dormant for a few months. Having "nothing to do," I thought at first was a very pleasant, as it was to me an entirely new sensation.

"I would like to call on you in the summer, if you have any leisure, in Bridgeport," said an old friend.

"I am a man of leisure and thankful that I have nothing to do ; so you cannot call amiss," I replied, with an immense degree of self-satisfaction.

"Where is your office down-town when you live in New York ?" asked another friend.

"I have no office," I proudly replied. "I have done work enough, and shall play the rest of my life. I don't go down-town once a week ; but I ride in the Park every day, and am at home much of my time."

I am afraid that I chuckled often, when I saw rich merchants and bankers driving to their offices on a stormy morning, while I, looking complacently from the window of my cozy library, said to myself, "Let it snow and blow, there's nothing to call *me* out to-day." But nature *will* assert herself. Reading is pleasant as a pastime ; writing without any special purpose soon tires ; a game of chess will answer as a condiment ; lectures, concerts, operas, and dinner-parties are well enough in their way ; but to a robust, healthy man of forty years' active *business* life, something else is needed to satisfy. Sometimes, like the truant school-boy, I found all my friends engaged, and I had no playmate. I began to fill my house with visitors, and yet frequently v.e



spent evenings quite alone. Without really perceiving what the matter was, time hung on my hands, and I was ready to lecture gratuitously for every charitable cause that I could benefit.

In April we made up a small, congenial party of ladies and gentlemen, and visited California *via* the Union and Central Pacific Railroads.

We journeyed leisurely, and I lectured in Council Bluffs, Omaha, and Salt Lake City, where amongst my audience were a dozen or so of Brigham Young's wives and scores of his children. By invitation, I called with my friends on President Young at the Bee-Hive. He received us very cordially, asked us many questions, and promptly answered ours.

"Barnum," said he, "what will you give to exhibit me in New York and the eastern cities?"

"Well, Mr. President," I replied, "I'll give you half the receipts, which I will guarantee shall be \$200,000 per year, for I consider you the best show in America."

"Why did you not secure me some years ago when I was of no consequence?" he continued.

"Because, you would not have 'drawn' at that time," I answered.

Brigham smiled and said, "I would like right well to spend a few hours with you, if you could come when I am disengaged." I thanked him, and told him I guessed I should enjoy it; but visitors were crowding into his reception-room, and we withdrew.

During the week we spent in seeing San Francisco and its suburbs, I discovered a dwarf more diminutive than General Tom Thumb was when first I found him, and so handsome, well-formed and captivating, that I could not resist the temptation to engage him. I gave him the soubriquet of Admiral Dot, dressed him in complete Admiral's uniform, and invited the editors of the San Francisco journals to visit him in the parlours of the Cosmopolitan Hotel.

Immediately there was an immense furore, and Woodward's Gardens, where "Dot" was exhibited for three weeks before going east, was daily thronged with crowds of his curious



fellow citizens, under whose very eyes he had lived so long undiscovered.

We spent some time in the Yo Semite; stopping by the way at the Mariposa grove of 'big trees, whence I sent to New York a piece of bark thirty-one inches thick.

Concluding a most enjoyable trip, we returned to New York, and first of June my family removed to our summer home, Waldemere. There the good and gifted Alice Cary, then in feeble health, and her sister Phœbe, were our guests for several weeks.

In September, I made up a party of ten, and we started for Kansas on a grand buffalo hunt. General Custer, commandant at Fort Hayes, was apprised in advance of our anticipated visit, and he received us like princes. He fitted out a company of fifty cavalry, furnishing us with horses, arms, and ammunition. We were taken to an immense herd of buffaloes, quietly browsing on the open plain. We charged on them, and during an exciting chase of a couple of hours, we slew twenty immense bull buffaloes, and might have killed as many more had we not considered it wanton butchery.

Our ten days' sport afforded me a "sensation," but sensations cannot be made to order every day, so, in the autumn of 1870, to open a safety-valve for my pent-up energies, I began to prepare a great show enterprise, comprising a Museum, Menagerie, Caravan, Hippodrome and Circus, of such proportions as to require five hundred men and horses to transport it through the country. On the tenth of April, 1871, the vast tents, covering nearly three acres of ground, were opened in Brooklyn, and filled with ten thousand delighted spectators, thousands more being unable to obtain entrance. The success which marked the inauguration of this, my greatest show, attended it the whole season, during which time it visited the Eastern, Middle and Western States from Maine to Kansas.

At the close of a brilliant season, I recalled the show to New York, secured the Empire Rink, and opened in that building on November 13th, 1871, being welcomed by an enthusiastic audience of ten thousand people. The exhibitions



were continued daily, with unvarying popularity and patronage, until the close of the holidays, when necessary preparations for the spring campaign compelled me to close. One of the most interesting curiosities added at that time, was a gigantic section of a California "big tree," of such proportions, that on one occasion, at the Empire Rink, it enclosed two hundred children of the Howard Mission. This section I afterwards presented to Frank Leslie, who had it mounted and roofed to form a summer-house on his Saratoga estate, where it now stands, a unique ornament and attraction.

During the winter of 1871 and 1872 I worked unremittingly, reorganising and reinforcing my great travelling show.

I so augmented the already innumerable attractions, that it was shown beyond doubt that we could not travel at a less expense than five thousand dollars per day, but, undaunted, I still expended thousands of dollars, and ship after ship brought me rare and valuable animals and works of art.

Perceiving that my great combination was assuming such proportions that it would be impossible to move it by horse-power, I negotiated with all the railway companies between New York and Omaha, Nebraska, for the transportation by rail, of my whole show, requiring sixty to seventy freight cars, six passenger cars, and three engines. This is the first time a tent show ever travelled by rail in any country.

The result is well remembered. The great show visited the States of New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, District of Columbia, Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan, often travelling one hundred miles in a single night to hit good-sized towns every day, arriving in time to give three exhibitions, and the usual street pageant at eight o'clock, A.M. By means of cheap excursion trains, thousands of strangers attended daily, coming fifty, seventy-five, and a hundred miles. Thousands more came in waggons and on horseback, frequently arriving in the night and "camping out." The tenting season closed at Detroit, October 30th, when we were patronised by the largest concourse of people ever assembled in the State of Michigan.

With wonderful unanimity the public press acknowledged



that I exhibited much more than I advertised, and that no combination of exhibitions that ever travelled had shown a tithe of the instructive and amusing novelties that I had gathered together. This universal commendation is, to me, the most gratifying feature of the campaign, for, not being compelled to do business merely for the sake of profit, my highest enjoyment is to delight my patrons. The entire six months' receipts of the Great Travelling World's Fair amounted to nearly one million dollars.

When not with the company, I spent most of my time at my ideal home, Waldemere, which I enlarged and beautified at a cost of ninety thousand dollars. There I had the honour and pleasure of entertaining Horace Greeley, my life-long friend, and of arranging for him those simple, healthful country amusements, so grateful and refreshing to a care-worn politician.

In October I visited Colorado, accompanied by my English friend, John Fish, and a Bridgeport gentleman, who had an interest with me in a stock-raising ranche in the southern part of that Territory.

We took the narrow gauge road from Denver to Pueblo, stopping at Colorado Springs, and the "Garden of the Gods." The novel scenery here amply paid us for our visit. From Pueblo I proceeded forty miles by carriage to our cattle ranche, and spent a couple of days there very pleasantly. We have several thousand head of cattle there, which thrive through the winter without hay or fodder of any kind. A railroad had just been opened from Pueblo to Trinidad which passes through a corner of my ranche.

In August, I purchased the building and lease on Fourteenth Street, New York, known as the Hippotheatron, purposing to open a Museum, Menagerie, Hippodrome and Circus, that would furnish employment for two hundred of my people who would otherwise be idle during the winter. I enlarged and remodelled the building, almost beyond recognition, at an expense of \$60,000, installed in it my valuable collection of animals, automats and living curiosities, and on Monday evening, November 18th, the grand opening took place. It was a beautiful sight: the huge building, with a seating capacity



of 2,800, filled from pit to dome with a brilliant audience, the dazzling new lights, the sweet music and gorgeous ornamentation completing the charm. The papers next morning contained loud and eulogistic editorials.

Four weeks after this inauguration I visited New Orleans. While there, the following telegram was handed me :

" NEW YORK, December 24, 1872.

" To P. T. BARNUM, *New Orleans* :

" About 4 A.M. fire discovered in boiler-room of circus building ; everything destroyed except 2 elephants, 1 camel.

" S. H. HURD, *Treasurer*."

Calling for writing materials, I then and there cabled my European agents to send duplicates of all animals lost, with positive instructions to have everything shipped in time to reach New York by the middle of March. I directed them further to procure, at any cost, specimens never seen in America ; and through sub-agents to purchase and forward curiosities—animate and inanimate—from all parts of the globe. I then despatched the following to my son-in-law :

" NEW ORLEANS, December 24.

" To S. H. HURD, *New York* :

" Tell editors I have cabled European agents to expend half million dollars for extra attractions ; will have new and more attractive show than ever early in April.

" P. T. BARNUM."

These details attended to, I took a calm view of the situation.

Returning to New York, I learned that my loss on building and property amounted to nearly \$300,000, to meet which I held insurance policies to the amount of \$90,000.

Before the new year dawned, I received tidings that my agents had purchased for me a full collection of animals and curiosities, and by the first week in April, 1873—but three short months after the fire—I placed upon the road a combination of curiosities and marvellous performances, that by far surpassed any attempt ever made with a travelling exhibition in any country. Indeed, so wonderfully immense was " Barnum's Travelling World's Fair " in 1873, that my



friends almost unanimously declared that it would "break" me. I suppose there is a limit beyond which it would be fatal to go, in catering for public instruction and amusement, but I have never yet found that limit. My experience is that the more and the better a manager will provide for the public, the more liberally they will respond. The season of 1873 was far from being an exception to this experience. My tents covered double the space of ground that I had ever required before, and yet they were never so closely *crowded* with visitors. Where thousands attended my show in 1872, numbers of thousands came in 1873. It visited the largest cities in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and the Middle and Western States, as far as St. Louis, Mo., taking Canada on the return route to New York.

While in Cleveland, Ohio, a little incident occurred which was described as follows by one of the Cleveland papers :

"A PRIVATE SHOW TO A SICK BOY—A PLEASANT EPISODE.

"Mr. P. T. Barnum's ambition to give the public a better show than anyone else can give them for the same money is well known, though very few are aware of the great pleasure he takes in providing amusement for little children. An incident happening in our city yesterday illustrated this characteristic very strikingly. There is a little five-year-old invalid up town who has become quite a favourite with the great showman, who never fails to visit him in passing through Cleveland. Yesterday morning the little fellow heard the door-bell ring, and his face lit up with joy as Mr. Barnum entered the sick-room. The usual pleasant greetings ensued, and the great manager threw his soul into the work of entertaining the child as completely as when surrounded by thousands he talks in his great show. The child was delighted, but the shadow which is always as near joy as the thorn is to the rose, stole over the little "Trot's" face on reflecting that he could not see the menagerie. "Never-mind," said Mr. Barnum, "if you cannot go to the show, we must bring the show to you." So saying, he departed, and a half-hour later the child and the whole family were astonished to see a drove of elephants, camels and dromedaries marched into the yard, and come to a halt near the child's window. The little one was held up where he could see the animals, and their keeper made them go through a regular performance. "Trot" gave his orders to the unwieldy elephants, and, by a sign from the keeper, they were all obeyed. In half-an-hour the *matinée* terminated, and the detachment of the procession marched back to the show-grounds, leaving the child wild with delight. Mr. Barnum's love for the



little ones has been frequently shown by the generous invitations he everywhere extends to orphans to attend his exhibitions free of charge; but this effort to please a little child is a unique illustration of that characteristic."

Notwithstanding my frequent visits to the "travelling show," I managed to spend much of the summer at my delightful "Waldemere."

In September of 1873, as I had not visited Europe since 1869, I concluded to run over and see the International Exhibition at Vienna, and visit other parts of Europe, to rest my over-worked brain, and see what could be picked up to instruct and edify my amusement patrons.

On landing at Liverpool, I was met by my old friend, John Fish, Esq., the "enterprising Englishman." Mr. Fish was the last friend\* who shook my hand as I left Liverpool in 1859, and the first to grasp it as I landed in 1873. After spending a few days at his house in Southport, the "Montpelier of England," a delightful watering-place eighteen miles from Liverpool, I proceeded to London. I met many of my old English friends here, including, of course, my esteemed friend and faithful agent, Robert Fillingham, Esq., and then hastened on to Cologne, Leipsic, Dresden, and Vienna, which latter city I reached ten days before the closing of the great World's Fair. Those ten days I devoted most assiduously to studying the marvels of this truly world's contribution, and I witnessed the ceremonies which terminated what was generally conceded to be the largest and best International Exhibition that the world ever saw. I proceeded leisurely back to Dresden, stopping at Prague on the way. Thence I went to Berlin, and, at each city, I took time to see all that was interesting.

While at Berlin, I received letters from my manager and treasurer, saying they would be able to secure a short lease of the Harlem Railroad property in New York, bounded by Fourth and Madison Avenues and Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh Streets, containing several acres, for the purpose of carrying out my long-cherished plan of exhibiting a Roman Hippodrome, Zoological Institute, Aquaria, and Museum of unsurpassable extent and magnificence. I immediately tele-



graphed them to take the lease, and within twenty-four hours from that time I was in telegraphic communication with seventeen European cities where I knew were the proper parties to aid me in carrying out a grand and novel enterprise.

I visited all the zoological gardens, circuses, and public exhibitions wherever I went, and thus secured numerous novelties and obtained new and valuable ideas.

At Hamburg I purchased nearly a ship-load of valuable wild animals and rare birds, including elephants, giraffes, a dozen ostriches, &c., &c.

I had concluded all my purchases in Hamburg on the 18th of November, 1873, and was taking a few last looks around the city previous to starting for Italy, when, on the 20th inst., I received from my son-in-law, Mr. Hurd, a telegraphic despatch announcing the death of my wife on the day previous.

It is difficult for those who have not had the sad experience to imagine the degree of anguish which overwhelms one when called to part with a beloved companion with whom he has lived forty-four years. That anguish must be greatly enhanced when such a death comes sudden and unexpected. But when the intelligence is not only unlooked for, but as, in my case, it finds the sorrowing husband four thousand miles away in a strange land, the loneliness of that mourner cannot be described.



## CHAPTER XXXIV

## AMONG MY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS.

AT length, the continual letters from my manager roused me to action, and I went at it with a will. What I did is shown in the following extract from the *London Era* :—

## “BARNUM’S NEXT SENSATION.

“The greatest showman of the day is once more in London completing preparations for the opening of the immense Hippodrome which he is erecting in New York. Some idea of the means which are being taken to create a sensation may be derived from the following facts : Mr. Barnum has not only sent agents to Spain and Africa to secure attractions, but has himself visited the Hippodrome in Paris, the Circus Renz at Vienna, Myers’ Circus at Dresden, Salamonski and Carre’s Circus at Cologne, the Zoological Gardens at Hamburg, Amsterdam, and other Continental cities, selecting and purchasing the choicest animals procurable, and engaging the most talented artists. He has secured what may fairly be called an endless variety of attractions, ranging from a race-horse to a Roman chariot. With the Messrs. Sanger alone he has done business to ‘the tune’ of £11,000. He has already shipped to New York elephants, camels and horses, trained for every species of circus performance. On the 25th a further ‘batch’ will be despatched, including sixteen ostriches, ten elands, ten zebras, a team of reindeer, with Lapland drivers, a troupe of performing ponies, monkeys, dogs, goats, &c., &c. The armour and costume makers of London are to be set to work immediately the pantomimes are off their minds and hands, and some portion of the paraphernalia which is to contribute to the gigantic whole will be shipped weekly. The Hippodrome will open in April next, and in the preliminary parade, we have no doubt, the citizens will find reason to say that their greatest and most popular showman has far outstripped all his former efforts. We may add that the New York enterprise will in no way interfere with the famous tent show everywhere known as ‘Barnum’s Great Museum, Menagerie, Circus and Travelling World’s Fair.’”

Ten days after, the *London Times*, whose editor had seen the original contract, published the following article :—

## “A THEATRICAL CONTRACT.

“Mr. P. T. Barnum, who is now in this country, has just entered into a contract with Messrs. Sanger, of Astley’s Amphitheatre, for



the purchase of the whole of the plant, wardrobe, and paraphernalia connected with the pageant of the 'Congress of Monarchs' exhibited at the Agricultural Hall four or five years since. The contract is as follows:

" ' This agreement made at the City of London, January 2nd, 1874, between Messrs. John and George Sanger, of the said City of London, Eng., and P. T. Barnum, of New York, United States of America, witnesseth, that for the sum of £33,000 sterling the said Messrs. J. and G. Sanger agree to complete and deliver to the said P. T. Barnum, *duplicates* of all the chariots, costumes, trappings, flags, banners, and other paraphernalia used by the said J. and G. Sanger in the production of the great pageant representing the Congress of Monarchs. Every article thus furnished by the said Messrs. John and George Sanger shall be *new*, and of the same quality and style used by them aforesaid. This collection embraces 13 gorgeous carved and gilt emblazoned chariots, and appropriate harness for 162 horses; 1,136 elegant and appropriate suits of armour, court dresses, &c., to faithfully represent all the principal monarchs and Courts in the world, and a *facsimile* of all the flags, banners, and everything else used in this pageant, except the horses, elephants, ostriches, giraffes, camels and other living animals. These the said Mr. P. T. Barnum will provide for himself. The arms of all nations represented on that occasion shall also be delivered to the said P. T. Barnum. The whole to be completed and delivered to the said P. T. Barnum or his agent, in London, by February 22nd, 1874. The said P. T. Barnum hereby agrees to pay the said £33,000 to the said Messrs. J. and G. Sanger for the make and perfect delivery of the articles hereby agreed upon—£13,000 to be paid upon the signing of the contract, and the remaining £20,000 on the 22nd day of February next, or upon the earlier completion of the contract by the said Messrs. John and George Sanger. Property to be delivered to Mr. Robert Fillingham, the said P. T. Barnum's agent, and to be approved by him.'

" This document was signed on Tuesday, and the £13,000 paid. Messrs. Sanger will have on view at their Royal National Amphitheatre the costumes they are about to provide Mr. Barnum."

Already had we leased from the Harlem Railway Company a plot of land, in the centre of New York, valued at over a million of dollars, and on that land we were to erect buildings which would probably cost two hundred thousand dollars.

Curiosity impelled me to attend the Tichborne trial one day. I was told it would be useless to attempt it, as none were admitted without a court order. I, however, applied at the door of Westminster Hall, where a great crowd was waiting, unable to get in. In reply to my request to be admitted, a policeman asked if I had an order from the court,



Upon my answering in the negative, he remarkèd: "Even if you had, you could not get in to-day, for every inch of room is occupied; but in no case can you ever get in without an order from the court."

I asked for the inspector who had charge of the police. Inspector Denning was pointed out to me, and I handed him my card.

"Are you the great American Museum man?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied; "I am the Museum man, the Tom Thumb man, the Jenny Lind man, and the Showman."

"My dear sir," said the inspector, "I am glad to see you. Please write your name on the back of your card, and I shall always prize it as a souvenir. I am very happy that I can show the celebrated showman something he never saw before."

He then led me into Westminster Hall, secured me a good seat, pointed out the "Claimant," Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, Justices Mellor and Lush, Dr. Kenealy, Mr. Hawkins, and other prominent personages.

I arrived in New York from Liverpool by the steamer *Scotia*, April 30, 1874, rejoiced to reach my native land again.

The great Roman Hippodrome had been open about a week, and on the evening of my arrival I was called out by the audience and was driven in my carriage around the immense arena, and saw what, to me, was indeed a great "show"—the largest assemblage of people ever gathered in one building in New York.

This truly stupendous and superb spectacle, as the unanimous voice of the press pronounced it, opened every evening with an allegorical representation of a "Congress of Nations," in a grand procession of gilded chariots and triumphal cars, conveying the Kings, Queens, Emperors, and other potentates of the civilised world, costumed with historical correctness, royally surrounded, and accompanied and followed by their respective courts and splendid retinues. The correctness and completeness of this historical representation required nearly one thousand persons and several hundred horses, besides elephants, camels, llamas, ostriches, &c.

The entire public, and the press, both secular and religious, declared unanimously, what is unquestionably true—that



never before since the days of the Cæsars, had there been so grand and so interesting a public spectacle.

Following the superb historical introduction were all kinds of races by high-bred horses, imported by scores from Europe and ridden and driven by accomplished experts of both sexes. To these succeeded various first-class entertainments, including the wonderful performances of the Japanese athletes, thrilling wire-walking exploits, athletic sports by non-professionals for prizes awarded as encouragement to such enterprises, semi-weekly balloon ascensions by Prof. Donaldson, the whole interspersed with plenty of genuine fun in the monkey and donkey races, and in "Twenty Minutes of the Donnybrook Fair and Lancashire Races"—and with all was "thrown in" my magnificent menagerie.

Although the Hippodrome could accommodate ten thousand spectators, for weeks in succession all the best seats were engaged days in advance, and it is literally true that at every evening performance thousands were turned away. My patrons included the President of the United States and his Cabinet, Governors and Judges, the clergy of all denominations, and all the best people of our land, who expressed but one opinion, that the exhibition, as I intended it should be, far surpassed the most sanguine expectations of what managerial experience and endeavour could possibly accomplish. In the very midst of such success, the necessity of covering the central part of the Hippodrome with glass, putting in heating apparatus, and otherwise preparing the immense building for the winter campaign, compelled me to temporarily transfer the entire vast establishment to Boston for three weeks, from August 3rd, thence to Philadelphia, returning, and reopening in New York about September 20th.

After the exciting scenes and unremitting labour of several weeks in New York, I retired to Waldemere for rest. No sooner had I arrived at Bridgeport than a newspaper paragraph announced to me that my friends and neighbours had determined to tender to me a public dinner. Flattering as this testimonial was, my first impulse was to express my gratitude for the tendered compliment, but by no means to accept it. But my mere arrival had already been the occa-



sion of a spontaneous and enthusiastic welcome, which a large number wished to make more formal and complete, so that the proposed tender of a dinner remained inevitable, and the following correspondence ensued.

"BRIDGEPORT, June 6, 1874.

"TO HON. P. T. BARNUM: Dear Sir,—As a mark of our esteem for your liberality and energy in private enterprise and in promoting the industries and public improvements of our city, we cordially invite you to dine with us on some early and convenient occasion.

"Yours very truly,

"R. T. CLARKE, Mayor.

Following the Mayor's signature were those of most of Bridgeport's leading citizens.

"WALDEMERE, BRIDGEPORT, CONN., June 6, 1874.

"TO HIS HONOUR, R. T. CLARKE, MAYOR, AND OTHERS:

"Gentlemen,—It is always pleasant to receive the approval of one's neighbours. To be tendered a public dinner by the most prominent and substantial inhabitants of a city where I have resided for more than a quarter of a century, is a compliment as gratifying as it is unexpected.

"Though conscious that to my recent return from abroad may be attributed your selection of myself at this time from among other citizens who have materially aided in 'promoting the industries and public improvements of our city,' yet I cannot forego the pleasure that I always enjoy in social intercourse with friends, and therefore your invitation is gratefully accepted. Any date agreeable to yourselves, after the 16th inst., will be convenient to me.

"Respectfully yours,

"P. T. BARNUM."

"COMPLIMENTARY DINNER TO P. T. BARNUM.

[From the "*Bridgeport Republican Standard*," July 3, 1874.]

"The complimentary dinner given by the citizens of Bridgeport to P. T. Barnum at the Atlantic House, Thursday evening, June 25, was in every respect a success, gratifying alike to the guest in honour of whose energy, thrift, public spirit and genuine philanthropy it was given, and to those who had conceived and carried it out so happily. The fine dining-hall of the Atlantic House was set with four long tables, one across the head of the hall, and the other three running at right angles to it and lengthwise of the room. At the first were seated the presiding officer, Mayor Clarke; the guest of the evening, P. T. Barnum, Esq., and his immediate friends from abroad, with ex-mayors of Bridgeport and other prominent citizens, while the men of all professions and callings, representing the wealth, respectability, enterprise and energy of our thriving town, occupied the other tables—in all, to the number of over two hundred. It is seldom that any public occasion calls out



such a body of our townsmen, and the company was one of which any Bridgeporter might well feel proud. Among the most prominent of our older citizens present were Hantford Lyon, Esq., Capt. John Brooks, Philo Hurd and Eli Thompson, Esqs. ; while amongst the prominent ex-city officials were ex-Mayors E. B. Goodsell and Jarratt Morford. Representatives from nearly all the prominent New York daily and weekly journals were also in attendance. The tables were profusely adorned with beautiful flowers, towards which nearly every large garden and greenhouse in town contributed, and these were tastily arranged in elegant vases, holders and stands, which displayed them to advantage and enhanced their beauty. Pyramids of fruit and delicate confections mingled with the flowers and added to the appropriate adornment. The bill of fare was an elaborate and exhaustive one, embracing all the luxuries of the season, cooked artistically, well served, and in profusion. The Wheeler and Wilson band, under leader Rosenburg, furnished music, and was, as usual, very fine. They played on the balcony in front of the hotel while the guests were assembling in the parlours, and subsequently enlivened the entertainment with judiciously-selected and well-played airs. Thus music, flowers, fruits, a good dinner and a good company, all combined to make the occasion pleasant and memorable. The guests sat down at the tables at about eight o'clock, after grace by Rev. Dr. Hopper ; but it was nearly ten before the inner man had been sufficiently satisfied with the constantly replenished supply of substantials and delicacies to admit of the ' feast of reason and flow of soul ' which was to follow. During the evening members of the committee were active in seeing that the wants of guests were supplied, and that nothing was left undone that would contribute to the success of the occasion. At ten o'clock His Honour, Mayor Clarke, called for the reading of the letters from invited guests who were prevented from attending, but who expressed their regard for the recipient of the compliment.

" Mr. CHARLES A. DANA, of the *New York Sun*, wrote : ' I am not surprised that the people of Bridgeport should pay such a compliment to so public-spirited a fellow-citizen.

" Mr. GEORGE JONES, of the *New York Times*, wrote : ' I hope you will have a glorious time, and I desire to be considered in, when Mr. Barnum's health is proposed, and further shall be glad to send the following : P. T. Barnum, " The man who cannot grow old."

" Rev. Dr. CHAPIN'S letter concludes : ' Nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to have met you and the good people of Bridgeport on the occasion referred to ; but now, I can only be with you in spirit—with the " ardent spirit " which is perfectly consistent with a teetotal dinner, and wish you all a first-rate time.'

" Rev. Dr. CUYLER, of Brooklyn, wrote : ' Tell the good people of Bridgeport for me, that the pleasantest hours I have spent in their town have been passed under Mr. Barnum's hospitable roof, and that they deserve to have noble-hearted citizens when they appreciate them. They cannot do too much to honour the public-spirited



man who has done so much for them. If I were present I should propose in clear crystal water this toast: A bright golden "Indian Summer" of life to our guest, who has made more children happy than any American of this generation. With a thousand good wishes, yours most cordially.'

"Gov. DIX wrote regretting that he was prevented from attending by his engagement to deliver an address to the graduating class of Union College, June 24.

"The following is from FRANK LESLIE'S letter: 'No man living more fully deserves the respect and confidence of all who know him. We have had business and friendly relations dating back twenty-five years, so I speak, "because I know the man." Years ago I was much impressed by the response of an old servant in answer to an inquiry as to what kind of person Mr. Barnum was: "What manner of man is Mr. Barnum? Why, just one of the kindest-hearted, public-spirited men that lives. Money flows from him like water in a just cause, and I haven't a good enough name to give him." with a burst of enthusiasm. And so, sir, I can only echo the words of his old servant, and say of the man to whom you do honour, that I have not a good enough name to give him.'

"Mayor CLARKE then announced the first regular sentiment of the evening, 'Our Guest,' and called upon Gen. William H. Noble to present it.

"Mr. BARNUM responded in his usual happy vein, amid repeated bursts of applause.

"Complimentary speeches were made by the Mayor, many prominent residents of Bridgeport, and guests from Hartford and other cities. After which was read a poem by Judge S. B. Sumner. Round after round of applause greeted every happy hit, and compelled a temporary suspension of the reading.

#### "JUDGE S. B. SUMNER'S POEM.

"I'm no pianist; nevertheless a psalm I must sing;  
This night in honour of our guest, the famous Money-King;  
The man who keeps informing us that poverty's a blunder,  
And rolls up wealth before our eyes, while we look on and wonder.

"If Alfred Mantalini could have chanced this man to see,  
His first ejaculations must have been, as you'll all agree,  
'Of all demerit wonderments that swell his fame and pelf,  
There never was a demerit one than Barnum is, himself!'

"There's no such thing as ciphering the gauge of such a man;  
To-day it's business in New York—to-morrow in Japan;  
One day beneath the sea, to find some learned, lovely shark,  
The next, 'way off on Ararat, for pieces of the Ark!

"Sometimes he calls for quarter, with the giant Fe-Fo-Fum;  
And then again he captures us with General Tom Thumb;  
One day in Bridgeport, staking out new streets across his farm,  
The next, in Windsor Castle, with Victoria on his arm;



- " One day upon the prairies, looking out for freaks of nature ;  
The next, in Hartford, speech-making before the legislature ;  
One day the Bearded Woman ; next, the Mermaid with her comb ;  
And now the Hippopotamus, and now the Hippodrome."
- " To-day recalling from the deep, oblivious shades of death,  
And so rejuvenating and rejoicing old Joice Heth :  
To-morrow, showing all at once, the wondrous Twins of Siam,  
And Julius Cæsar's boxing-gloves, and fish-pole used by Priam.
- " One day the fiery element his big Museum slashes,  
But next day, lo ! it rises as a Phoenix from its ashes ;  
And while the croakers shake their heads, and dubiously figure,  
The crocodile gives broader smiles, the show keeps growing bigger
- " I never, NEVER, saw his like ; and so I might as well  
Give o'er at once the vain attempt all his exploits to tell ;  
It's all recorded—read of all—on everybody's shelf :  
' Biography of P. T. Barnum, written by himself.'
- " There's not a journal round the world, whose columns haven't  
known him,  
Nor board fence, on whose superfluous bill-posters haven't shown him ;  
No savage or philosopher, no Gentile, Greek, or Roman,  
But knows of this ubiquitous, inevitable showman.
- " But ' showman ' though he style himself, we know the world but tells  
A vulgar fraction of what force within his manhood dwells ;  
An orator of wide repute, a poet and a preacher,  
An author and an editor, a student and a teacher !
- " A wit of ever-ready fund within his storehouse ample ;  
Of Temperance, alike renowned apostle and example :  
Philanthropist, with human kind not merely sympathetic,  
But generous and bountiful, and grandly energetic.
- " And last—by no means least—of all ; and that is why we come  
Thus heartily to welcome him—a lover of his home !  
A home that proudly crowns to-day a whilom barren waste,  
The triumph and the marvel now of fine æsthetic taste !
- " But prouder monument for him ; within the city's bound,  
Full many a score of happy habitations may be found,  
Whose owners will not soon forget the prudent head that planned  
The homes they ne'er had builded but for Barnum's helping hand !
- " Oh, when the leaf of human life is turning sere and yellow,  
One's best reflection can but be, that he has served his fellow ;  
How many a man had been a wreck, whose fate had quite undone  
him,  
If Barnum hadn't raised, and put wheels under him, and ' run ' him
- " Now, if our fellow-citizen had been a sordid hunk,  
Who hoarded all his treasures in old stockings and in trunks,  
We simply should have set him down a flinty-hearted sinner,  
Instead of voting him a ' brick ' and complimentary dinner.
- " And so we wish it understood, and thoroughly inferred,  
These testimonials of esteem—we mean them, every word.  
We toast not wealth, nor simply brains, but, as we proudly can  
The qualities that always make the hero and the man,



- " Long life and health to him and his, to do and gather good,  
And when at last he shall be called to cross the Stygian flood,  
Surviving friends with tearful eyes, beholding him embark,  
Shall place his statue, I predict, within the Seaside Park ;
- " And every boy who looks thereon, the record shall review,  
And learn what steady Yankee pluck and industry can do ;  
And as our city grows apace, an ever-Crescent fame,  
As halo, shall surround her pristine benefactor's name.
- " And meanwhile, he'll be ransacking the Universe for ' stars,'  
And lay a cable through the air from Jupiter to Mars,  
And institute a comet-race, on some tremendous wager,  
And cage up Taurus, Scorpio, the Whale and Ursa Major
- " And hire the Twins—oh, Gemini !—to manage a balloon,  
And make the exhibition of the old man in the moon ;  
And in the vast arena, pit the Sickle of the Lion  
Against the vaunted sword and belt of arrogant Orion
- " And, finally, discovering the brink of Hades' crater,  
Put out the conflagration with his Fire Annihilator ;  
Exorcise from the neighbourhood, the ' cussed ' imps of evil,  
Nor rest, till he has raised, reformed, and then—ENGAGED—the  
Devil ! "

" Mr. GEORGE MALLORY begged leave to offer, as a final sentiment, the following one, in which all could join : ' May the flag at Waldemere long continue to float over that mansion, indicating, as it does, that its owner is " at home." ' (Applause.)

" Three cheers were then called for by Mayor CLARKE in honour of P. T. Barnum, which were given with a rousing will, and the company dispersed at about one o'clock."

The American *Register*, published in Paris, in its issue of July 11, 1874, speaking of this dinner says :

" The press, the pulpit, the bench and bar were all liberally represented. It may seem strange to Europeans that such distinguished men should accept invitations to a dinner in honour of a common showman, as Mr. Barnum is too often called ; but their surprise will cease when we tell them what that gentleman really is. True, he is a showman, but he is also a man of considerable personal acquirements, of great public spirit, and a good citizen. He is an excellent representative of the indomitable strength and energy of our young nation. Moreover, he is a man of great generosity, and knows how to spend money as well as to make it. By this we mean that he spends it in a way which tends to the public good. There are very few men who have ever known Mr. Barnum who would not have been pleased to join in a dinner given to him, and since we were not able to be present on the occasion, we are happy to pay our tribute in another form to that liberal-minded and large-hearted man."



## CHAPTER XXXV

## HIPPODROMICAL, HYMENIAL AND MUNICIPAL

IN July, 1874, immense canvas tents were made of sufficient capacity to accommodate all my great Roman Hippodrome performances. These tents, with the expense of removing the whole Hippodrome establishment to Boston for a three weeks' exhibition, cost me nearly fifty thousand dollars. During the three weeks' exhibition in Boston the tents were crowded each afternoon and evening with the most delighted audiences. Excursion trains on all the railroads leading to Boston brought thousands of visitors to the Hippodrome every day, and the Boston and New England papers, secular and religious, without exception, were loud in praise of what all acknowledged to be by far the most gorgeous, extensive, instructive and expensive travelling exhibition of which we have any record.

From Boston the entire Hippodrome was transported by railroad to Philadelphia, where a success was achieved fully equal to that in Boston. The Hippodrome afterwards visited Baltimore, Pittsburgh and Cincinnati, everywhere drawing immense crowds, and opened again in my great Hippodrome building in New York, in November, where, for several months it afforded a treat to the American public that may not perhaps be witnessed again in this generation. I am confident that nothing less than my reputation for forty years as a liberal caterer for public instruction and amusement would have brought a paying response to my efforts. The great religious community aided mostly in sustaining this hazardous enterprise.

In the autumn of 1874 I married again. My second wife is the daughter of my old English friend, John Fish, Esq., whom I have embalmed in the twenty-sixth chapter of this book. We were married in the Church of the Divine Paternity, Fifth Avenue, New York, by my old and esteemed friend, the Rev. Dr. Chapin, in the presence of members of my



family and a large gathering of gratified friends. After a brief bridal tour, our wedding receptions were attended at Waldemere.

In December, 1874, His Majesty, David Kalakau, King of the Sandwich Islands, visited New York. I invited the King and his suite to attend the Hippodrome, which they did on the afternoon of December 26th. During the entire performance I was seated by the side of the King who kept up a pleasant conversation with me for a couple of hours. I took occasion to remind him that this was by no means the first time I had had the honour of "entertaining royalty," as he would see from my book—a handsome presentation copy of which he had accepted from me on Christmas Day. He expressed himself highly delighted with my entertainment, and said he was always fond of horses and racing. Some twelve thousand persons were present, and when the exhibitions were about half finished they called loudly, "The King! The King!" Turning to me, His Majesty inquired the meaning of this. I replied: "Your Majesty, this vast audience undoubtedly wishes to give you an ovation. This building is so large that they cannot distinctly see your Majesty from every part, and are anxious that you should ride around the circle in order that they may greet you."

The King looked surprised, and presently the audience commenced calling, "The King! Barnum! Barnum! The King!" At that moment my open barouche was driven into the circle and approached where we were sitting.

"No doubt your Majesty would greatly gratify my countrymen," I remarked, "if you would kindly step into this carriage with me and ride around the circle."

The King immediately arose, and, amid tremendous cheering, he stepped into the carriage. I took a seat by his side, and he smilingly remarked, *sotto voce*: "We are all actors."

It is said that "It never rains but it pours," and just at this time I was visited by a shower of royalty and nobility. The King of Hawaii had scarcely left New York before I received an invitation to breakfast with Lord Rosebery at the Brevoort House, Fifth Avenue. The invitation stated that his lordship would sail for England on the twenty-seventh of January, and



that having seen most of our country, and its "lions," he did not like to leave without having an interview with Barnum. I accepted the invitation. The breakfast came off at ten o'clock in the morning of January 26th, and I need scarcely say it was a most dainty, delightful, and *recherché* affair. Only one gentleman besides his lordship was present. I found my host a very intelligent gentleman. He had been in America once before, and he seemed well "posted" in regard to our country and its institutions. He said he had read my autobiography, and had witnessed with amazement and delight the scenes at my Roman Hippodrome. These enhanced his desire to see "the man who was so celebrated throughout the world for the magnitude and perfection of his enterprise as a caterer for public gratification."

I accepted the compliment as gracefully as I could, and we were soon conversing socially without restraint on either side. Lord Rosebery is a good story-teller, and, what is still more pleasing to a loquacious old traveller like myself, he is a capital listener. While discussing the luxurious meal, we interchanged amusing anecdotes and personal experiences, some of mine so tickling his lordship's keen sense of humour that, more than once, he pushed back his chair from the table and gave vent to his hilarity in hearty, unrestrained laughter.

In March, 1875, the nomination for Mayor of the City of Bridgeport was tendered me by a committee from the Republican party, but I declined until assured by prominent members of the opposition that my nomination was intended as a compliment, and that both parties would sustain it. Politically, the city is largely Democratic, but I led the Republican ticket, and was elected, April 5th, by several hundred majority. On the twelfth of April the newly-elected Common Council held its first meeting, on which occasion I delivered my inaugural address, from which the following is an abstract. It should be remembered that this was the time of the great financial panic.

"Gentlemen of the Common Council: Intrusted as we are by the votes of our fellow-citizens, with the care and management of their interests, it behoves us to endeavour to merit the confidence



reposed in us. We are not placed here to gratify personal or party resentment, nor to extend personal or party favour in any manner that may in the remotest degree conflict with the best interests of our city. As citizens we enjoy a great common interest. Each individual is a member of the body corporate, and no member can be unduly favoured or unjustly oppressed without injury to the entire community. No person or party can afford to be dishonest. Honesty is always the best policy. 'With what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again.'

"We are all acquainted with the great principles of Justice and Right. If we fail to work according to these eternal principles, we betray the confidence placed in us, and this our year of administration will be remembered with disapprobation and contempt.

"As conservators of the public peace and morals, it is our duty to prevent, so far as possible, acts which disturb one or the other, and to enforce the laws in an impartial and parental spirit.

"The last report of our Chief of Police says: 'Tis a sad and painful duty, yet candour compels us to state that at least ninety per cent. of the causes of all the arrests during the year are directly traceable to the immoderate use of intoxicating liquors, not to speak of the poverty and misery it has caused families which almost daily come under our observation.'

"The money annually expended for intoxicating drinks, and the cost of their evil results in Bridgeport or any other American city where liquor-selling is licensed, would pay the entire expenses of the city (if liquors were not drunk), including the public schools, give a good suit of clothes to every poor person of both sexes, a barrel of flour to every poor family living within its municipal boundaries, and leave a handsome surplus on hand. Our enormous expenses for the trial and punishment of criminals, as well as for the support of the poor, are mainly caused by this traffic. Surely, then, it is our duty to do all we can, legally, to limit and mitigate its evil.

"The public health demands that we should pay attention to necessary drainage, and prevent the sale of adulterated food.

\* \* \* \* \*

"As cleanliness is conducive alike to health and morality, I recommend that we establish one or more floating baths, a portion of which might be free, and the rest subject to a small charge, which would nearly or quite cover the expense of the whole.

"It is painful to the industrious and moral portions of our people to see loungers about the streets, whose highest aspirations seem to be to waste their time in idleness or at base ball, billiards, &c.

"No person needs to be unemployed who is not over fastidious about the kind of occupation. There are too many soft hands (and heads) waiting for light work and heavy pay. Better work for half a loaf than beg or steal a whole one. Mother earth is always near by, and ready to respond to reasonable drafts on her never-failing treasury.

"The soil is the foundation of American prosperity. When



multitudes of our consumers become producers; when fashion teaches economy, instead of expending for a gaudy dress what would comfortably clothe the family; when people learn to walk until they can afford to ride; when the poor man ceases to spend more for whiskey and tobacco than for bread; when those who complain of panics learn that 'we cannot eat our cake and keep it,' that a sieve will not hold water, that we must rely on our own exertions and earn before we expend, then will panics cease and prosperity return. While we should by no means unreasonably restrict healthy recreation, we should remember that 'time is money,' that idleness leads to immoral habits, and that the peace, prosperity, and character of a city depend on the intelligence, integrity, industry and frugality of its inhabitants."

During the autumn of 1875, under the auspices of "The Redpath Lyceum Bureau," in Boston, I delivered about thirty times a lecture on "The World and How to Live in It," going as far east as Thomaston, Maine, and west to Leavenworth, Kansas, and including the cities of Boston, Portland, Chicago, Kansas City, &c. When finished, the Bureau wrote me as follows: "In parting for a season, please allow us to say that none of our best lecturers have succeeded in delighting our audiences and lecture committees so well as yourself."



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC.

IN December, 1876, I received a second invitation from Lord Rosebery to breakfast with him in New York. On parting with his lordship in 1874, his warm expressions of pleasure at having met me, and his assurances that he hoped and intended to renew our acquaintance, left no room for embarrassing misgivings on this occasion. Our meeting at the Brevoort House was very cordial. His lordship took me in his brougham to the New York Club, and there I first learned that our breakfast companions were Martin Farquhar Tupper, and the chief editor of a prominent New York daily paper. Mr. Tupper and myself had held a correspondence previous to his leaving England, and the author of "Proverbial Philosophy" was apparently delighted at the unexpected meeting of his "dear friend Barnum." The occasion was an exceedingly enjoyable one, and if, as is said, "Laughter aids digestion," I am confident that three of the quartette were not troubled with dyspepsia after that delicious and *recherché* meal. Since his marriage with Miss Rothschild, I have received a letter from Lord Rosebery, in which he makes pleasant and witty allusion to that never-to-be-forgotten breakfast. The Transatlantic friends of this brilliant nobleman are pleased to know that he has been recently chosen Lord Rector of the University of Aberdeen.

In 1876 I accompanied my great show as far east as Halifax, Nova Scotia, where we exhibited early in August. The show proceeded west to Illinois. The financial result of the travelling season (1876) was satisfactory.

In July, 1877, I sailed for England, with my wife, in the Cunard steamer *Russia*, both of us arriving home eight weeks later in the *Scythia* of the same line. At the request of the captains and passengers, I gave a lecture on each steamer for the benefit of the Seamen's Orphan Institution in



Liverpool. I also gave my lecture on "The World, and How to Live in It," several times in the Royal Aquarium Theatre, London, in the Alexandra Palace, London, Southport Winter Gardens, and in Bolton. I likewise lectured on Temperance in Hawkstone Hall, London, at which the celebrated Rev. Newman Hall presided; and I gave a similar lecture in Hengler's Circus building, Liverpool. The London *Entr'acte*, the London *Sporting and Dramatic News*, and several other metropolitan papers, published *illustrations* of my appearance in the forum, and numerous London journals gave favourable notices of my lectures.

The London (England) *World* published in March, 1877, the following sketch. My neighbours generally say it is a truthful representation of me and my surroundings "at home," but I think the writer has made the picture too flattering.

#### "CELEBRITIES AT HOME.

"P. T. BARNUM.

"A stranger in America, happening to alight at Bridgeport, a thriving city of some 25,000 inhabitants, beautifully situated on the shore of Long Island Sound, within sixty miles of New York city, might be surprised to find that it owes much of its prosperity to the business tact and energy of its most prominent citizen, Phineas Taylor Barnum. Ask any inhabitant of this third city of the State of Connecticut who built those rows of cottages, reminding an English traveller of those built by the more philanthropic manufacturers at home, and the answer comes, 'Barnum.' How is it that so many operatives possess homes of their own? Again the answer, 'Barnum helped them.' Who planned your Mountain Grove—one of the most beautiful Cemeteries in America? 'Barnum started it, and thus did away with an old, neglected burying-ground, that used to be in the heart of the city.' And your lovely Seaside Park; who originated that? 'Oh, Barnum, of course: he gave some of the land, begged and bought the remainder, and never rested until the park became what it is—the greatest ornament and blessing of our city.' You may go on with the catechism *ad libitum*, and will find that this 'showman' has been a zealous worker in, and generally prime mover of, every public improvement. That his fellow-citizens appreciate his efforts is apparent, for they elected him Mayor, twice sent him to represent the town in the State Legislature, nominated him for the United States Congress, and, on one occasion, within the last few years, on his return from a visit to England, over two hundred of the most substantial citizens of Bridgeport gave him a complimentary dinner, 'in honour of the



liberality and energy in private enterprise ; in promoting the industries and public improvements of Bridgeport ; and the genuine philanthropy' of their popular fellow-townsmen.

" Mr. Barnum, when at home, is in great request. Few temperance meetings are considered complete unless he is a prominent speaker ; few church bazaars are expected to succeed unless he opens them with a humorous speech, which seldom fails to open hearts and purses. The youngest urchin can point the way to Seaside Park, and there, standing on a slight eminence, looking down on the park and across its narrowest part to the waters of the Sound, over whose surface steamers, yachts, and every variety of water craft are continually passing, stands Waldemere, from whose cupola floats a silken flag bearing the well-known monogram, P. T. B., whenever the king of showmen is at home. Waldemere—Woods-by-the-Sea—so named by its owner's friend, Bayard Taylor, is a naturally beautiful estate beautified by art. Its well-kept lawns, broad and sweeping, are ornamented with fountains of bronze and marble ; statues gleam against a background of grove and thicket ; the house is girdled with a broad belt of flowers, and flower-beds of every English device border the drives from gateway to porch. The house itself is not easily described, being a curious but pleasant mélange of Gothic, Italian, and French architecture and decoration, presenting a front a hundred and sixty feet long to the water, whereby most of the rooms command a very charming view. On entering one is pleasantly struck by the spaciousness of hall and rooms. One can breathe as freely indoors as out. Nothing is small and contracted. The house is furnished luxuriously but not ostentatiously ; taste as well as wealth being evident in the arrangement of every room. Pictures of high merit hang on tinted walls and stand on easels. Chinese vases of quaint and wonderful design guard the fire-places ; busts and statuettes fill nooks and corners ; capacious bookcases hold the latest works ; while mantels and etageres hold costly bric-à-brac in artistic confusion. Many of these ornaments abound in interesting reminiscences for the ' great showman ' and for his friends. On a pedestal in a place of honour stands a marble bust of Jenny Lind, whose original contract with P. T. Barnum hangs framed in one of the halls, the signatures of Jenny Lind, Sir Julius Benedict, Giovanni Beiletti, and P. T. Barnum, compelling us to pause for a moment before it. A corner bracket in a cosy sitting-room holds a small Parian Bacchus—a Christmas gift from the Swedish Nightingale to Mr. Barnum, in good-natured ridicule of his firm temperance principles and practice. In an etagere in this same pleasant room lie dimpled marble models of Tom Thumb's hand and foot, taken when his size was smallest and his fame greatest. One cannot spend half an hour inspecting Waldemere without discovering that Mr. Barnum is a firm believer in cleanliness, either for its relation to godliness or for its own merits. The mansion is intersected with a very network of water-pipes—there being scarcely a room that has not its bath-room and



lavatory attached. There are rooms bearing the names of distinguished guests who have occupied them. A spacious bed-room, with hangings and furniture of pale green and white, is known as the 'Greeley room,' for here Horace Greeley had reposed. Two pleasant rooms are associated with the memory of the sister poetesses, Alice and Phœbe Cary. Doubtless there will some time be a 'Twain room,' for the humourist is a frequent guest at Waldemere.

"Mr. Barnum's second wife is a young English lady of culture, the daughter of an old friend of his in Lancashire. The good taste displayed in the ornamentation of Waldemere is due to Mrs. Barnum, who is highly appreciated by the best families of Bridgeport as a charming hostess, an intelligent and agreeable conversationalist, and a kind neighbour and friend. Mr. Barnum's daughters regard her as a treasure added to their enjoyment, and to their father's happiness and comfort. As for Mr. Barnum himself, his round full face beams with extra smiles when he is near her. He never seems quite so happy as when listening to her playing opera music on the grand piano, riding at her side in the family landau to and from church, in Seaside Park, or on the numerous pleasant avenues in the vicinity of Bridgeport.

"Mr. Barnum's library, or as he calls it, 'workshop,' is an imposing octagonal room furnished and panelled with cherry, birch, and maple woods. Opening on one hand is a lavatory, and on another a room where his private secretary works within call. At a large and much-littered desk, with papers strewn ankle-deep around his chair, Mr. Barnum spends nearly every morning of his life communicating with his agents in every land—often interrupted by some employé desiring orders, or by some friend or stranger asking advice or more substantial help, but never laying down his pen, which is travelling rapidly as ever ere the door has closed behind his visitor. He is economical of his time, never wasting or submitting to be robbed of a moment of the hours set apart for business. Woe to the adventurer or visionary who intrudes at this time. He is weighed, found wanting, and dismissed in two minutes. These long mornings, and a short time devoted on the arrival of each mail to answering the letters they never fail to bring—these hours over, the keen but conscientious man of business, the head of so many undertakings—enjoys himself with as much apparent freedom from care as the workman who has just pocketed a good week's wages. If Mr. Barnum, when working, dislikes to be interrupted, Mr. Barnum, when enjoying himself, is even less tolerant of business intrusion. The intruder may desire to purchase valuable land, and come with the money in his pocket; he is none the less decisively told to 'come in the morning.' The personal appearance of P. T. Barnum will interest those who may not have seen the man nor his portrait. Tall, portly, erect, in spite of his sixty-seven years of hard work and several fortunes earned and lost, and won again, with a high forehead, grey hair curling crisply



around a bald head, with a firm, decided step and voice, he is very different from the popular conception of a showman—as indeed his social standing upsets the general idea of a showman's natural and proper status.

"It is only when large placards and flaming advertisements announce once a year that Mr. Barnum's great 'museum, menagerie and hippodrome, travelling on a hundred railway cars,' will stop a day at Bridgeport, that its citizens actually realise that their fellow-citizen is a showman, for nothing in his appearance, his surroundings, or his conversation indicates it. Wherever Mr. Barnum exhibits his travelling show the curiosity to see him is greater than to witness any part of his exhibitions. On such occasions, if he is present, he is invariably called into the 'ring,' where he entertains his patrons with a short speech.

"Heaven denied Mr. Barnum a son, and wisely, for there could be no worthy second of P. T. Barnum. Not even on a son could a mantle of so much foresight and energy fall. But he is blessed with daughters and a troop of grandchildren, including two boys of bright promise, whose lives, as far as in him lies, he has made all sunshine. For them he bought stately houses in New York, and built summer houses on his own estate of Waldemere. It is here the 'great showman' spends his happiest hours and lives his private life, which is more restful and joyous than that of most public men. It is here that, while never losing his hold on the reins of his many enterprises, while never forgetting nor neglecting the smallest detail of them—it is here that the keen man of business enjoys life with the zest of a fun-loving, mischievous boy. Here he is the genial host, the indulgent father, the ideal grandpa. Here he has many visitors; for he loves to see around his table the faces of friends whom he entertains not alone with the good things of the earth; but with an inexhaustible store of experiences and anecdotes, told with an inimitable gravity that never falters, while his listeners are convulsed at the different voice and facial expression he involuntarily gives to each character he describes. Men who have not laughed for twenty years, or may-be never, hold aching sides when it is their good fortune to meet P. T. Barnum in a merry mood. All summer long in the centre of this group of children, grandchildren, and guests, he is the prime-mover of picnics, 'clam-bakes,' musicals, and long country drives. Mr. Barnum imported for his grandchildren's amusement English donkeys and Shetland ponies, and not unfrequently he is found riding in the little donkey carriage with his delighted juvenile playmates. Every evening, when all are gathered together, he enjoys his favourite amusement—whist, pausing occasionally to applaud a song sweetly sung by an accomplished daughter, or to dislodge a small grandchild who may be perched perilously on the back of grandpa's chair. A love of children is one of P. T. Barnum's characteristics—a love returned by all his small acquaintances; for who is so patient with little folks and who so fertile in devising amusements for them as he?



Who can relate such wonderful stories, improvising when the original narrative is not sufficiently thrilling? Who can conjure so fearfully—swallowing watches and making pennies drop out of little curly heads? Who can bark so like a dog—who, when the babies seize the tail of his coat, can slip out of it so unconsciously, and suddenly perceive he is coatless, with such an air of astonishment as sets the small thieves wild with delight? And who but he has taught every child of his acquaintance to drive like a Jehu? Another trait is his admiration for fast-trotting horses, of which he always keeps several for his own special use. Timid men never ask P. T. Barnum for a seat in his 'buggy,' for he is a fast and reckless driver; his light vehicle skims along the road rocking, swaying, spinning around corners at a speed which leaves one to marvel how it is he is never thrown out. He will not submit to be passed on the road, and, in consequence, he almost daily arrives home spattered from head to foot with dust or mud, according as the weather may be. Such features as are not entirely covered with spatters beam with satisfaction, as he usually wins the race, thanks to his favourite black horse—a superb animal, to use his own expression, he has never 'insulted' with a whip, a word being all that is needed to start or stop him."

In the spring of 1877, I offered ten thousand dollars for the return of the kidnapped Charley Ross to his afflicted parents. But though my offer was published far and wide on both sides of the Atlantic, all efforts for his restoration proved unavailing.

In November, 1877, I was re-elected to represent Bridgeport in the General Assembly of Connecticut, and am at present a member of that body.

My great travelling show is by far the most expensive and marvellous combination of the world's wonders ever brought together for a similar purpose. It is the result and culmination of my experience in that line for nearly half a century. *I own every railway car*—nearly one hundred in number—on which this "army with banners" is transported through the country from April to November, travelling each season about twelve thousand miles, and exhibiting in one hundred and forty different towns and cities, reaching from Nova Scotia to California. It is preceded a fortnight in advance by my Magnificent Advertising Car, carrying press agents, the "paste brigade," numbering twenty, and tons of immense coloured bills, programmes, lithographs, photographs, electrotype cuts, &c., to arouse the entire country for fifty miles



around each place of exhibition to the fact that "P. T. Barnum's New and Greatest Show on Earth," with its acres of tents and pavilions, could be reached by cheap excursion trains on certain days specified in the bills and advertisements. I frequently visited the show during its summer progress, my presence on these special occasions being announced, with the additional statement that I would address my patrons from the arena.

Last summer I visited my great show at Erie, Pa., incognito. The town was crowded with country visitors, brought on the various railroads at reduced rates of fare. About eleven thousand country people occupied the seats in the great equestrian tent at the afternoon exhibition. I seated myself quietly in their midst. It was edifying and amusing to hear the remarks of the rustics at the performances of the trained horses and elephants, and the various marvellous feats of the riders and gymnasts. They had never seen the like before. An old farmer and his wife sat next to me. They were highly excited.

"Wal, I declare," said the farmer's wife, "I ain't seen a cirks sence I was a gal, but this beats all creation. I never did 'spose 'twas possible to do sich wonderful things!"

"Nor I neither," replied her husband, "and I tell you, Jane, nobody under Heaven but Barnum could ever get up sich a wonderful show. Derved ef I wouldn't give more to see Barnum himself than his hull show, wonderful as 'tis."

"So would I," responded the wife, "and perhaps we shall see him. The papcrs say he travels a good deal with his show."

Meanwhile more and more startling novelties appeared in the arena, drawing forth renewed exclamations of delight from my country patrons. Ever and anon the old farmer would exclaim:

"Golly! how I would like to see the crittur that got up all these miracles."

As one of the ushers passed him, he said:

"Say, you waiter, is Barnum here?"

"Yes," replied the usher, leering at me with a smile; "I believe he is around somewhere."

"You jist tell him to cum and sec me and my wife, will ye?"



I'll stand the lemonade if he'll cum. By George! I must see Barnum, if possible, before we go hum."

I was tempted to gratify my friend, and was just about to speak to him when one of my best riders came dashing into the arena riding four horses, standing on their backs while they were at the top of their speed. He was a young athlete, finely formed, and as sprightly as a deer. Presently, while the horses were running like greyhounds, he turned a somersault and stood upon his head on the back of one of the horses. His feet were high in the air, and the horse kept up his rapid gallop round the ring. The audience was half wild with excitement, and gave vent to deafening hurrahs. At this moment my farmer friend, with his eyes almost starting from their sockets, jumped upon his feet, and swinging his old hat over his head, he screamed at the top of his voice, "By thunder! I'll bet five dollars that is Barnum! There ain't another man in America who can ride in that way except Barnum!" My country friend had got his money's worth. He had seen Barnum, as he supposed, and I felt it a pity to disabuse his mind. I said nothing. He probably still thinks I am about twenty-four years old, and the best rider living.

My associate managers from 1876 to 1880 were Messrs. George F. Bailey, Lewis June, and John J. Nathans. My treasurer (a most popular and efficient gentleman for that position) is Mr. W. E. Sinclair.

I have invariably found that the more liberal I was with the public the greater was my patronage, hence I never spare pains nor expense as a caterer for public amusement and instruction. My well-known rigid rules for excluding from all my exhibitions everything of an immoral or vulgar tendency, and my desire to be a public educator in my line of business secures me the indorsements of the religious press and the patronage of the moral, refined, and religious classes, thousands of whom never visit any other travelling tent exhibition.

Among the hundreds of letters which I am constantly receiving from clergymen, indorsing the morality and excellence of my "Greatest Show on Earth," I select the following, from which the public can judge of the estimate in which my efforts to amuse, elevate and instruct the public are held



by such distinguished preachers of the Gospel as Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D., and Rev. E. H. Chapin, D.D.:

"BROOKLYN, January 13, 1878.

"MY DEAR OLD FRIEND—'The King never dies.' This old maxim of royalty seems to apply to you as the King of Exhibitors and Caterers, not merely to the public amusement, but to popular instruction.

"Millions of 'little folks' may consider you their benefactor in affording them innocent gratification. I have several times taken my children to your Museums, Menageries, and Exhibitions, and have not observed there anything profane or impure. I especially thank you for your allegiance (both in your practice and in your business) to the principle of *total abstinence from all intoxicants*.

"With a thousand good wishes, and with kindest regards to your family, I remain,

"Yours sincerely,

"THEO. L. CUYLER, D.D."

"NEW YORK, January 15, 1878.

"MY DEAR BARNUM—It gives me great pleasure to express my *sincere* opinion, that in the entertainments which you have furnished for the public, your patrons have always received a full and profitable money's worth, and that they are fitted not only to amuse, but to *instruct*, and are certainly free from anything that can be in the least objectionable to any refined or religious person.

"I remain, truly yours,

"E. H. CHAPIN, D.D."

As evidence of the estimation in which my Greatest Show on Earth is held by the religious press, I quote a few of the notices it received last season. The *Christian Examiner and Chronicle* of April 20th, says: "Barnum's Great Show is well worth everybody's seeing. It is not too much to say that it is the greatest exhibition of its kind in the world." The *Christian at Work* says: "We have visited Barnum's Great Novel and Instructive Exhibition. Amusement is necessary to us all—and when we can combine instruction and amusement, as in this case, we see no reason why we should not be gratified in this respect, and our children as well." The *Methodist* says: Barnum's Greatest Show on Earth, which we have visited at the American Institute in this city, is entirely worthy of public patronage. It is amusing, interesting and instructive." The *Christian Union* says: "The delighted public has once more an opportunity of enjoying that Great Moral and Instructive Exhibition which Mr. P. T. Barnum



has for a generation or two, and for a very moderate money consideration, innocently pleased and educated amusement-loving Americans." The *Independent* says: "Barnum claims that this show is the Great Moral and Instructive Exhibition—and Barnum tells the truth. All the world says so."

In the summer of 1878 I expended some twenty thousand dollars in the purchase and reclamation of a large tract of salt marsh adjoining Seaside Park, and the grounds of Waldemere on the west. This marsh has been inaccessible from time immemorial, annually producing plentiful crops of mosquitoes. The times were hard, many labouring men in Bridgeport were suffering for want of employment, and although it was evident I should never be reimbursed for half my expenditures, I could see that the improvement would be a great public benefit, and remembering the dykes in Holland which I had so frequently seen with astonishment and admiration, I determined, as I told my neighbours, to "cheat my heirs," by expending a good sum *pro bono publico*. I built this dyke straight across a channel which let in the tide-water every twelve hours and covered an immense tract of low salt meadow. I made the dyke seventy feet wide at the bottom, and of sufficient width on the top to form a fine street leading from one of our city avenues to the beach on Long Island Sound. This gives nearly a mile high and dry front on the salt water connecting with Seaside Park. I propose to make a present to the city of this "water" front, 150 feet in width, which will give them as an extension of their already beautiful Park, a delightful additional boulevard for carriages and promenade on the very edge of Long Island Sound, where the plashing salt waves may be seen, heard and enjoyed for all time. Mayor Morford (of opposite politics from myself) in his message to the Common Council of Bridgeport, characterised my proposition as a "liberal offer" and said, "the Barnum Boulevard, in connection with the Seaside Park, adding nearly a mile to the present park-drive, would be the finest improvement of the kind on the Atlantic Coast."

The Manchester (England) *Examiner and Times* recently published an editorial article coupling my name with those of the British Ministry, to which I replied as follows:



*"To the Editor of the 'Examiner and Times,' Manchester, England :*

"Sir—In your issue of the 3rd instant you make mention of of me as 'the late Mr. Barnum.' For the benefit of numerous friends in Great Britain, who have not before heard of my being classed among the 'lates,' I beg to say that my age is among the sixties, and that, having been a teetotaler for thirty years, I am robust in health, and maintain the same vigour I possessed at forty. I am proprietor of the most extensive Museum, Menagerie, World's Fair, and Hippodrome that ever travelled, being run at an expense of \$3,000 (or £600 sterling) per day, and my highest ambition professionally, now is, to pay to the British Government one hundred thousand dollars (£20,000) for the privilege of exhibiting alive, for five years, its 'white elephant' King Cetowayo, the captive Zulu. I shall be glad to receive, by an early mail, a note of acceptance from my friend Lord Beaconsfield, who so kindly mentioned me in his 'Lothair.'

"Truly yours, P. T. BARNUM."

"WALDEMERE, BRIDGEPORT, CONN., NOV., 1879."

"NOTE.—During the forty years that I have been a manager of public amusements, the number of my patrons has been almost incredible. From a careful examination of my account-books for the different exhibitions which I have owned and controlled, I find that more than eighty-two millions of tickets, in the aggregate, were disposed of, and numerous exhibitions which I have had at various times are not included in this statement.

The travelling Exhibitions which I managed during the six years preceding my purchase of the New York Museum, in 1841,	we were attended by	1,500,000 persons
The American Museum which I managed from 1841 to 1865, when it was destroyed by fire, sold		• 37,560,000 tickets
My Broadway Museum, in 1865-8, sold	3,640,000	„
My Philadelphia Museum, 1849-51, sold	1,800,000	„
My Baltimore Museum sold	900,000	„



My travelling Asiatic Caravan, Museum and Menagerie in 1851-4, sold	5,824,000 tickets
My great travelling World's Fair and Hippodrome, in 1871-6, sold	7,920,000    ,,
By other travelling exhibitions in America and Europe up to May 1882, sold	10,200,000    ,,
General Tom Thumb has exhibited for me 34 years, and sold	20,400,000    ,,
Jenny Lind's Concerts, under my management, were attended by	600,000 persons
Catharine Hayes' 60 Concerts in California, under my contract, sold	120,000 tickets

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Thus, my patrons amount to the enormous number of 90,464,000

“Of course, ninety millions of different individuals have not visited my various exhibitions, for many persons visited my Museums, &c., scores, and some undoubtedly hundreds of times. But, taken altogether, I think I can, without egotism, say that I have amused and instructed more persons than any other manager who ever lived. In addition to the ninety millions who have visited my public exhibitions, I may add that I have delivered over seven hundred public lectures, which were attended in the aggregate by 1,300,000 persons. My first autobiography, published in 1851, reached a circulation of 160,000 copies, besides which two separate editions were published in England, one in Germany, and one in France. These, in the aggregate, had probably more than a million of readers. Of my autobiography, ‘Struggles and Triumphs,’ published in 1869, and written up to 1877, 240,000 copies have been printed in America, and a different edition in London, all of which I estimate have had two millions of readers. It will thus be seen that ‘Barnum’ has occupied so much public attention for forty years, that the fact need not be wondered at (and it is a fact), that in 1870 a letter mailed in New Zealand, and addressed simply ‘Mr. Barnum, America,’ came as direct to me at Waldemere, Bridgeport, Conn., as it could have done if my full address had been written on the envelope. P. T. B.”



## CHAPTER XXXVII.

## THE GREAT ALLIANCE—JUMBO.

IN 1879 and 1880, the show under the same management was very successful. I introduced the firing of Zazel from a cannon. This has since been the principal feature of other shows, as has also the tattooed Greek whom I first introduced to the American public in 1876. While exhibiting in the Rink in 1880, I had a business encounter with Henry Bergh, Esq., which created much interest and excitement in the arena and the newspapers. A New York daily paper gave the following faithful account of the affair :

"The controversy between P. T. Barnum and Henry Bergh, which has occupied public attention for a few days, was ended yesterday in favour of the veteran showman. It will be remembered that Mr. Bergh compelled Mr. Barnum to discontinue the act of the fire-horse Salamander, on the grounds of cruelty to the animal and danger to the audience. Mr. Barnum, with an eye to a stupendous advertising scheme, and doubtless with a wish to assure his patrons that everything had been done to secure their safety, challenged Mr. Bergh to meet him in the circus ring on Monday afternoon and to reply to his explanations. Yesterday the vast American Institute Building was unable to accommodate the crowds who clamoured for admission. Shortly after the opening of the show Superintendent Hartfield, of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, entered, in command of seven of his officers. Captain Gunner, who originally made the report that caused Mr. Bergh's interference, was also on hand with a posse of twenty policemen, who were assigned positions around the ring. At the conclusion of the bareback horsemanship of Orrin Hollis, Mr. Barnum entered the arena amid an outburst of applause. When this had subsided, Mr. Barnum began his speech and said,

"Ladies and Gentlemen—I have been catering to the public for forty-eight years, yet I am here to-day expecting arrest by this large force of police, and imprisonment and trial by a jury of my countrymen. The patent fact is just this: Mr. Bergh or I, must run this show. Mr. Bergh has published that I have endangered the lives of my audiences. Long before he was known to society, I was a subscriber to a society in London, similar to the one of which he is chief, and of which Queen Victoria was a patron. It was I who called the attention of the Mayor of the city to the necessity for



such a society here, and I am, in Bridgeport, what Mr. Bergh is here. I know more about animals than he knows. They are taught and governed only by kindness. The fire-horse, Salamander's performance has been witnessed by the Emperor of Germany, Prince Bismarck, Queen Victoria, and many of the most prominent people in Europe, and he, like other animals, being valuable, self-interest demands protection and proper treatment. In this performance not a hair of the horse is singed.

"'Years ago,' continued Mr. Barnum, 'Mr. Bergh demanded that I should furnish the rhinoceros with a tank of water to swim in, when such a proceeding would have killed it. I explained to Mr. Bergh the nature of the animal and its requirements, and he troubled me no further. In 1866, during my absence from New York, Mr. Bergh frightened my manager into sending the snakes to New Jersey to be fed, objecting to their being supplied with live toads and lizards, although it was explained to him that, while they were only attracted by living food, they crushed and killed it before swallowing. On my return I ordered them to be fed with live frogs in order to preserve their lives.

"'I hold in my hand,' said Mr. Barnum, 'a letter from Mr. Bergh, dated "Rooms of Society, No. 826, Broadway, Dec. 11, 1866," from which I will read an extract:

"I am informed that several live animals were recently thrown into the cage with your boa constrictor to be devoured! I assert, without fear of contradiction, that any person who can commit an atrocity such as the one I complain of is semi-barbarian in his instincts \* \* \*. It may be urged that the reptiles will not eat dead food. In reply to this I have only to say—then let them starve; for it is contrary to the merciful providence of God that wrong should be committed in order to accomplish a supposed right. But I am satisfied that this assertion is false in theory and practice, for no living creature will allow itself to perish of hunger with food before it—be the aliment dead or alive. On the next occurrence of this cruel exhibition, this society will take legal measures to punish the perpetrators of it.

(Signed) "HENRY BERGH, President."

"'I sent a copy of this letter to the elder Prof. Agassiz, and received the following autograph letter in reply. It is too rich to keep longer from the public:

"CAMBRIDGE, Feb. 28, 1867.

"P. T. BARNUM, Esq., Dear Sir—On my return to Cambridge I received your letter of the 15th January. I do not know of any way to induce snakes to eat their food otherwise than in their natural manner—that is, alive. Your Museum is intended to show the public the animals as nearly as possible in their natural state. The society of which you speak is, as I understand, for the prevention of unnecessary cruelty to animals. It is a most praiseworthy object, but I do not think the most active members of the society would object to eating lobster salad because the lobster was boiled alive, or



refuse roasted oysters because they were cooked alive, or raw oysters because they must be swallowed alive. I am, dear sir, your obedient servant,  
"L. AGASSIZ."

"On March 4, 1867, I enclosed Prof. Agassiz's letter to Mr. Bergh, from whom I demanded an apology for his abuse, and an acknowledgment of his mistakes as to snakes eating dead food. Three days later Mr. Bergh replied, acknowledging the receipt of mine. He then wrote as follows :

"Your letter contains a threat to give my letter to the public unless I write you a letter for publication, stating that since reading Prof. Agassiz's letter to you I withdraw my objections, &c. In reply to this I have to say that the hastily-written note to which you refer was not intended for publication."

"Hastily written, indeed," commented the great show king, 'calling my acts atrocities and me semi-barbarous in my instincts.' He then proceeded with the letter :

"I am convinced of the necessity of labouring more assiduously in the cause of protecting the brute creation in order to counteract the unhappy influence which the expressions of that distinguished savant (Prof. Agassiz) are calculated to occasion. I scarcely know which emotion is paramount in my mind, regret or astonishment, that so eminent a philosopher should have cast the weight of his commanding authority into the scale where cruelty points the index in its favour.

"HENRY BERGH, President."

"He detailed other obstacles which Mr. Bergh had thrown in his way, and intimated that if he (Bergh) would stick to his own business, that he (Barnum) would run his own show, and conform to the laws as decided by a jury of his countrymen. In conclusion Mr. Barnum said : 'I now expect to be arrested, but if I should be, I shall place a hoop of fire around Henry Bergh that will make him warmer than he has been in the past, and probably than he ever will experience in the future.

"The effort was received with tremendous cheering. The horse Salamander was then brought into the ring by Prince Nagaard, its trainer, and the fire hoops were lighted. Mr. Barnum ran his hand through the blaze, and then stepped through the flaming circle, hat in hand. Ten clowns performed a number of ludicrous antics through the hoops, and then the horse passed through without showing any signs of fear and without singeing a hair. Mr. Barnum had not yet finished the illustration, however, for he requested Superintendent Hartfield to walk through the still blazing hoops. Without hesitation he did so, and he got more applause than Mdme. Dockrill in her four-horse act. Superintendent Hartfield then stated that his superior, Mr. Bergh, had evidently made a mistake in the matter; that there was neither cruelty nor danger in the performance, and that the society had no cause for action. Amid the wildest excitement and cheers for the plucky Barnum, Captain



Gunner, looking somewhat crestfallen, withdrew his officers, and the show went on. Salamander again went through his tricks last night without interruption."

Although I was forced to resent his ill-advised interference and mistaken accusation, this episode did not impair my personal regard for Mr. Bergh, and my admiration of his noble works.

In the spring of the same year, 1880, I erected on the principal street of Bridgeport, a fine building for business purposes. It was built behind a board screen or casing the full height of the structure. Its purpose was to protect the workmen and enable them (time being an object) to work regardless of inclement weather, but when, the work being finished, the screen was removed in the night-time, and early risers saw, instead of unsightly boards, a handsome building of brick, with granite and terra cotta ornaments, and a fine statue of America gazing benignly down, from her alcove in the second story, on the wondering and admiring crowd below, I was suspected of having planned a very effective transformation scene.

So late as 1880, no travelling show in the world bore any comparison with my justly-called "Greatest Show on Earth." Other show-managers boasted of owning shows equalling mine, and some bought of the printers large coloured show-bills pictorially representing my marvellous curiosities, although these managers had no performances or curiosities of the kinds which they represented. The cost of one of their shows was from twenty thousand to fifty thousand dollars, while mine cost millions of dollars. Their expenses were three hundred to seven hundred dollars per day, while mine were three thousand dollars per day. The public soon discovered the difference between the sham and the reality, the natural consequences of misrepresentation followed; the small show-men made little or nothing, some went into bankruptcy each season, while mine was always crowded, and each succeeding year showed a larger profit.

My strongest competitors were the so-called "Great London Circus, Sanger's Royal British Menagerie and Grand International Allied Shows." Its managers, Cooper, Bailey and



Hutchinson, had adopted my manner of dealing with the public, and consequently their great show grew in popularity.

On the 10th of March, 1880, while in Philadelphia, one of their large elephants, Hebe, became a mother. This was the first elephant born in captivity, and the managers so effectively advertised the fact that the public became wild with excitement over the "Baby Elephant." Naturalists and men of science rushed in numbers to Philadelphia, examined the wonderful "little stranger" and gave glowing reports to the papers of this country and of Europe. Illustrated papers and magazines of this and foreign lands described the Baby Elephant with pen and pencil, and before it was two months old I offered the lucky proprietors one hundred thousand dollars cash for mother and baby. They gleefully rejected my offer, pleasantly told me to look to my laurels, and wisely held on to their treasure.

I found that I had at last met foemen "worthy of my steel," and pleased to find comparatively young men with a business talent and energy approximating to my own, I met them in friendly council, and after days of negotiation we decided to join our two shows in one mammoth combination, and, sink or swim, to exhibit them for, at least, one season for one price of admission. The public were astonished at our audacity, and old showmen declared that we could never take in enough money to cover our expenses, which would be fully forty-five hundred dollars per day. My new partners, James A. Bailey and James L. Hutchinson, sagacious and practical managers, agreed with me that the experiment involved great risk, but, from the time of the Jenny Lind Concerts, the Great Roman Hippodrome and other expensive enterprises, I have always found the great American public appreciative and ready to respond in proportion to the sums expended for their gratification and amusement.

This partnership entered into, we conceived the idea of building a monster emporium, or winter quarters, to accommodate all our wild animals, horses, chariots, railroad cars, and the immense paraphernalia of the united shows, instead of distributing the same in different localities. We enclosed



a ten-acre lot in Bridgeport adjacent to the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. In this enclosure we erected an elephant house one hundred feet square, kept heated to the temperature naturally required by these animals. Here twenty elephants are luxuriously housed and trained to perform in a circus-ring in the centre. A very interesting peculiarity of these animals is that after going through their tricks and performances at their keeper's command, and being led back to their respective posts, they keep on practising, and it is irresistibly ludicrous to see them ranged around the huge building gravely and clumsily balancing themselves on one leg, or standing on their heads of their own free will, as if the idea once being got into their understandings could not be dislodged at the close of the lesson.

In another large building the lions, tigers and leopards, which require a different temperature, are lodged and trained. Still another accommodates the giraffes and caged animals. The monkeys have roomy quarters all to themselves, where they can roam and work their mischievous will unrestrained. The amphibious animals, hippopotami, sea-lions &c., have in their enclosure a huge pond heated by means of steam pipes, where the elephants are permitted their great enjoyment, a bath. A building three hundred feet long covers eight lines of tracks where the cars are stored, and these tracks are all connected by switches with the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. In a circus-ring, exclusively for the purpose, the riders, acrobats, &c., practice in the winter, so as not to lose their hard-won skill and suppleness. The chariots are all placed in one huge store-house, and are run into position by the larger elephants, which, standing behind the chariots, put their heads against them, and, with wonderful intelligence and docility, push them in place at the direction of their keeper. The elephants are always called into requisition when a car gets off the switches, and indeed they do all the heavy work of the winter quarters. A nursery department maintained for the reception and careful tending of new-born animals adjoins the office of the veterinary surgeon. The harness, paint and blacksmith shops are all immense and distinct.



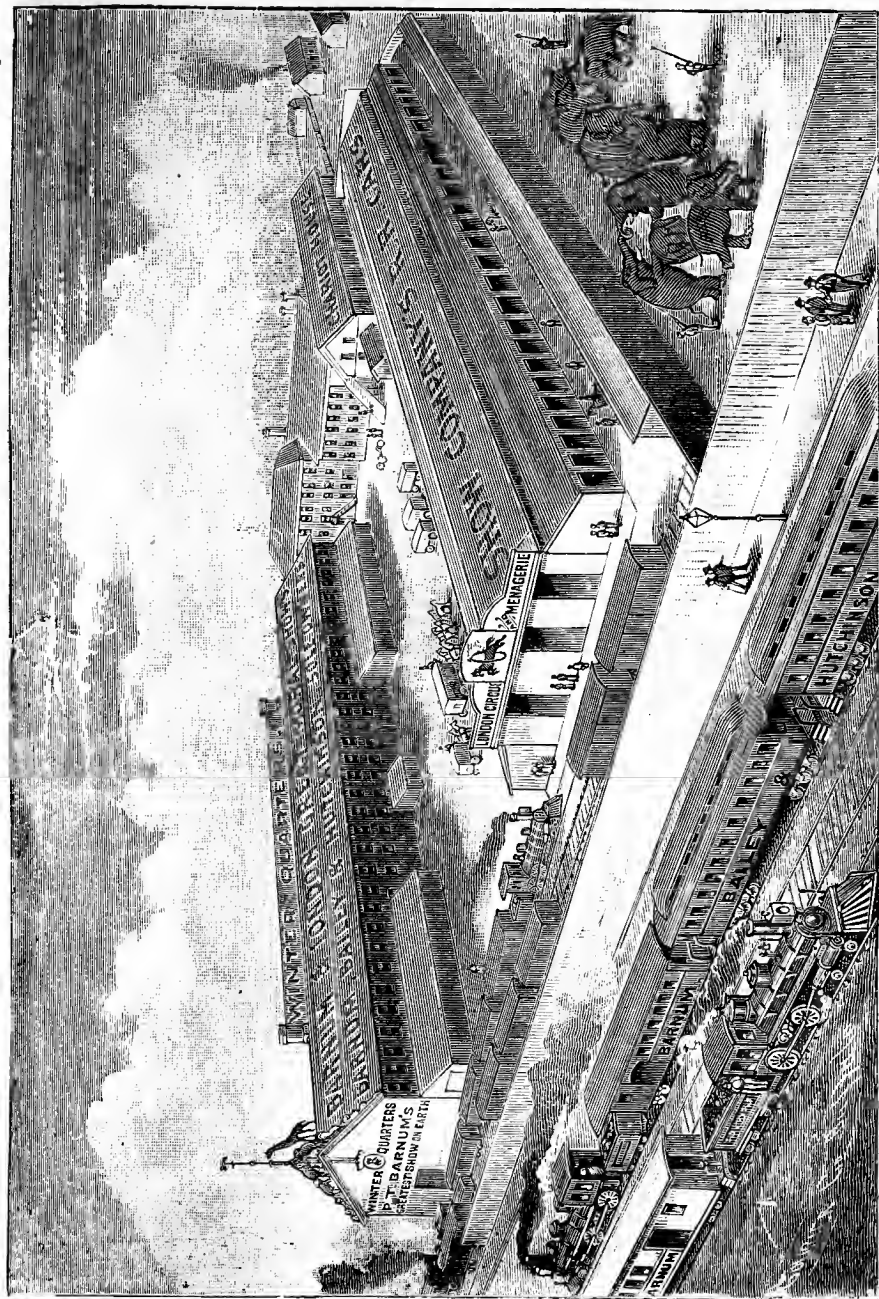
The accommodations include stabling for several hundred of our best horses, and store-rooms for canvas, tent-poles and innumerable properties. Editors and artists flocked to see the quickly-famous winter quarters, and well-illustrated articles appeared in leading periodicals. The public also were anxious and curious to see the workings of this city of wonders, but were reluctantly denied admission, as visitors deranged the necessarily strict routine of the establishment, and were themselves in no little danger, many of the wild animals which are perfectly tractable when alone with their keepers, being permitted to leave their cages and frolic at large in their respective buildings. The signs which designate the different buildings are visible from all trains passing through Bridgeport.

In November of 1880, while in New York on business, I was suddenly attacked by an almost fatal illness, and laid for many weeks betwixt life and death, unconscious of the tender solicitude shown me by countless and good friends in this country, and the cable messages of inquiry that came thickly from others in foreign lands; the knowledge of all which will be ever a bright and grateful memory. Dr. Chapin, then on his death-bed, sent a messenger daily; reporters besieged the house at all hours, and contributed bulletins of my progress or relapse to all the principal New York papers; while the Associated Press kept the remoter public informed by telegraph of my condition. When strong enough I went to Florida, to recuperate in that delightful climate, returning in April to take up my old avocations with the old zest, and little less than the old strength.

The Barnum and London Circus opened in New York, March 28th, 1881, heralded by a torchlight procession through the city on Saturday night, March 16th, which was witnessed by more than half a million of people and pronounced the most brilliant display ever seen in America. A New York paper thus described it:

"The street parade on Saturday night was the grandest pageant ever witnessed in our streets, and fully met the anticipations of the thousands of spectators thronging the entire route. The whole equipment and display was magnificent, without a single weak feature to mar the general effect. The golden chariots, triumphal





WINTER QUARTERS OF THE GREAT LONDON-BARNUM SHOW.



and tableau cars were more numerous, more ponderous, more elaborate and gorgeous in finish than any other establishment has brought here ; the cages of wild animals were more numerous than usual, many of them were also open, and their trainers rode through the streets in the cages of lions, tigers, leopards, hyænas and monster serpents. There were cars drawn by teams of elephants, camels, dromedaries, zebras, elk, deer and ponies. And there appeared in the grand cavalcade three hundred and thirty-eight horses, twenty elephants, fourteen camels, jet black dromedaries, a large number of ponies, zebras, trained oxen, &c., also three hundred and seventy men and women. The cavalry of all nations was represented in the various uniforms worn, mounted upon superb chargers, and the costumes throughout were brilliant and beautiful. Music was furnished by four brass bands (one composed of genuine Indians), a caliope, a fine chime of bells, a steam organ, a squad of Scotch bag-pipers, and a company of genuine plantation negro jubilee singers."

Electric and calcium lights illuminated the whole. Windows were sold in New York, along Broadway, for five dollars, eight dollars, and ten dollars, from which to view the pageant. So certain were we that this great street pageant and the marvellous combination of novelties to be produced throughout the season would totally eclipse any former show enterprise, that on Saturday, March 26th, we brought, in drawing-room cars, from Washington, D. C., and Boston, and all the principal cities on those routes, the editors of all the leading papers. These gentlemen, nearly one hundred in number, witnessed the torchlight procession on Saturday night, and our opening performance at the Madison Square Garden, Monday night, March 28th. They were lodged at hotels at our expense, and by us returned to their homes on Tuesday ; a very costly piece of advertising, which yet yielded us a magnificent return in the enthusiastic editorial endorsements of so many papers of good standing, whose representatives had seen our show, and exclaimed, as did the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon, "The half was not told me."

The following extract from the *New York Herald*, of March 29th, will give some idea of the variety and excellence of our attractions for 1881 :

"MADISON SQUARE GARDEN—BARNUM'S CIRCUS AND SHOW.

"The management at Madison Square Garden have redeemed their promise to give the public one of the best arenic exhibition



in connection with a menagerie that ever has been witnessed in New York. Long before the doors were opened they were besieged by anxious hundreds, and at a quarter-past eight o'clock there was scarcely a seat to be obtained in the vast edifice. It was stated by one of the proprietors that about nine thousand persons were present, and fully three thousand who could not be accommodated were refused admission. The spectacle can therefore be better imagined than described. Indeed it was worth the price of admission alone to see the immense crowd and note the intense interest exhibited by all classes present, from the representatives of wealth and fashion, who were there in large numbers, to the little arabs to whom a circus is a paradise. The arrangements for the convenience of the audience were in every way complete. Each individual was provided with a chair, so that all crowding was avoided, while an ample supply of ushers promptly and without confusion conducted the holders of tickets to their respective places. Everything was new and clean, from the costumes to the sawdust. No bad flavours disturbed the nostrils; electric lights made the auditorium as bright as day; the ventilation was good and a strong force of police were present to preserve order had their services been required. The only drawback to the performance was that the spectator was compelled to receive more than his money's-worth; in other words, that while his head was turned in one direction he felt that he was losing something good in another. Three rings were provided, marked on the programmes as Circle No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3; the equestrianism taking place in the two outer rings and the central space being reserved more especially for what are technically known as 'ground acts.' The display began with the usual pageant, in which a vast number of rich dresses and handsome animals were exhibited, after which there was a general introduction of the most notable curiosities, including General Tom Thumb and lady, Chang, the Chinese giant, the bearded woman, the American baby elephant, giant horse, ox, a pair of giraffes broken to harness, and other features. Six common plough oxen were next shown, after which followed extraordinary performances on horseback, gymnastic and athletic exercises, juggling, wire-rope walking, trapeze-flying and other attractions 'too numerous to mention.' Among the most interesting portions of the performance were the military drill and other feats by twenty trained elephants, the balancing by a Japanese family and the extraordinary jumping of the group of leapers who ended the programme. The clowns were exceptionally good and one or two quite original. Altogether the show is well worth seeing."

Very early in the travelling season of 1881 we enlarged our already immense tents three different times, and yet so great was the multitude that attended our exhibitions—many coming on excursion trains twenty, thirty, and even fifty miles—that at half the towns we visited we were unable to



accommodate all who came, and we turned away thousands for want of room. In every town we were patronised by the *élite*, and frequently the public and private schools, as well as manufactories, were closed on "Barnum Day," school committees and teachers recognising that children would learn more of natural history by one visit to our menagerie than they could acquire by months of reading.

In Washington, President Garfield told me he always attended my shows, and when Secretary Blaine said, "Well, Barnum! all the children in America are anxious to see your show," the President smilingly added, "Yes! Mr. Barnum is the Kris Kring of America."\*

Sir Edward Thornton, the British Ambassador, secured seventy-five seats at one of our exhibitions in Washington and the next day wrote me a letter, in which he said, "I certainly consider it the best organised and most complete establishment of that kind that I have ever visited, and that it is the most instructive and enjoyable." General Sherman wrote: "I say, without hesitation, that it surpasses anything of the kind I have seen in America or Europe." I received the autographic endorsements of President Garfield, Vice-President Arthur, Secretary Blaine, McVeagh, Roscoe Conkling, Hunt, Secretary of the Navy, Robert T. Lincoln, T. L. James, Senators Frye, Salisbury, Lamar, and Platt, of Connecticut, Governor Hawley, and most of the Foreign Ambassadors, Cabinet Ministers, and United States Senators. The *furor* which my show never fails to excite everywhere was tersely and wittily expressed in a notice posted up in a factory in a town which we visited last season: "Closed on account of the greatest interference on earth."

The immense patronage which my own country bestows on

\* As an instance of the great popularity and high esteem in which Mr. Barnum is held in the States, we quote the following from a recent number of the *New York Tribune*:

"On the occasion of the Rev. Robert Collyer's sermon in the Church of the Messiah, upon 'Emerson,' when he rose to begin his lecture he said: 'I see P T. Barnum sitting in a back pew of this church, and I invite him to come forward and take a seat in my family pew. Mr. Barnum always gives me a good seat in his circus, and I want to give him as good a one in my church.' Mr. Barnum took the seat amid the smiles of the congregation. Mr. Collyer then began his lecture."



my efforts is all that has kept me from taking my big show to Europe, where my name is as well-known as in America. I fully intend, however, to transport the entire show to England, including the great elephant 'Jumbo,' in the autumn of 1883, or the spring of 1884. It cannot be done earlier.

For years showmen have asserted that I did not own my show; others assumed to be my relatives and representatives. Determined to put down these false assertions and assumptions, I sued the *Philadelphia Sun* for \$100,000 damages in April, 1881, for saying that I merely hired out my name. The publisher, convinced of his error, retracted the statement and apologised. I withdrew the suit, having obtained all the redress I desired. In May, 1881, the desire to acquire, for my show-season of 1882, attractions which only my personal negotiations could secure, I revisited England, sailing in the *Scythia*. After four pleasant weeks I returned in the *Gallia*, successful in the object of my journey, and invigorated by that finest of all tonics, a sea voyage. Desiring to aid in beautifying the village of Bethel, it being my birthplace, from which a busy, checkered life has never alienated my interest, I presented to my old companions a bronze fountain eighteen feet high, made in Germany; the design a Triton of heroic size, spouting water from an uplifted horn. It was a gala day for Bethel, the streets and residences were decorated with flags and bunting, a procession of police, fire companies with their engines, bands of music, citizens and invited guests in carriages, &c., paraded the town, and they formed in line around the square, newly adorned by the fountain. All of which was described, and the fountain illustrated in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, of Sept. 3, 1881. From a grand stand many speeches were made, and as my old friends would not permit me to be merely a listener and looker-on, and as reminiscences of the old days presented themselves thickly in my mind in wide and often amusing contrasts to the customs and conditions of to-day, I addressed them:

"My Friends,—Among all the varied scenes of an active and eventful life, crowded with strange incidents of struggle and excitement, of joy and sorrow, taking me often through foreign lands and bringing me face to face with the king in



his palace and the peasant in his turf-covered hut, I have invariably cherished with the most affectionate remembrance the place of my birth, the old village meeting-house, without steeple or bell, where in its square family pew I sweltered in summer and shivered through my Sunday School lessons in winter, and the old school-house where the ferule, the birchen rod and rattan did active duty, and of which I deserved and received a liberal share. I am surprised to find that I can distinctly remember events which occurred before I was four years old.

“I can see as if but yesterday, our hardworking mothers hetcheling their flax, carding their tow and wool, spinning, reeling and weaving it into fabrics for bedding and clothing for all the family of both sexes. The same good mothers did the knitting, darning, mending, washing, ironing, cooking, soap and candle making, picked the geese, milked the cows, made butter and cheese and did many other things for the support of the family.

“We babies of 1810, when at home, were dressed in tow frocks, and the garments of our elders were not much superior except on Sunday, when they wore their ‘go-to-meeting clothes’ of homespun and linsey-woolsey.

“Rain water was caught and used for washing, while that for drinking and cooking was drawn from wells with their ‘old oaken bucket’ and long poles and well sweeps.

“Fire was kept over night by banking up the brands in ashes in the fire-place, and if it went out one neighbour would visit another about daylight the next morning with a pair of tongs to borrow a coal of fire to kindle with. Our candles were tallow, home-made, with dark tow wicks. In summer nearly all retired to rest at early dark without lighting a candle except upon extraordinary occasions. Home-made soft-soap was used for washing hands, faces and everything else. The children of families in ordinary circumstances ate their meals on trenchers (wooden plates). As I grew older our family and others got an extravagant streak, discarded the trenchers and rose to the dignity of pewter plates and leaden spoons. Tin peddlers who travelled through the country with their waggons supplied these and other luxuries. Our food consisted





BRONZE FOUNTAIN PRESENTED TO MY NATIVE TOWN.



chiefly of boiled and baked beans, bean porridge, coarse rye bread, apple sauce, hasty pudding eaten in milk, of which we all had plenty. The elder portion of the family ate meat twice a day—had plenty of vegetables, fish of their own catching, and occasionally big clams, which were cheap in those days, and shad in their season. These were brought from Norwalk and Bridgeport by fish and clam peddlers. Uncle Caleb Morgan of Wolfpits or Puppytown, was our only butcher. He peddled his meat through Bethel once a week. It consisted mostly of veal, lamb, mutton or fresh pork, seldom bringing more than one kind at a time. Probably he did not have beef oftener than once a month. Many families kept sheep, pigs and poultry, and one or more cows. They had plenty of plain substantial food. Drove of hogs ran at large in the streets of Bethel.

“When one of the neighbours wanted to feed his hogs he went out in the street and called ‘Pig,’ which was pretty sure to bring in all the other hogs in the neighbourhood. I remember one man, called ‘Old Chambers,’ who had no trouble in this respect, and he was the only one excepted from it. He had a peculiar way of getting his hogs from the general drove. When he wanted them he would go out into the street and shout ‘Hoot! hoot! hoot!’ At this cry, all the hogs but his own would run away, but they understood the cry and would stand still and take the meal.

“Our dinners several times each week consisted of ‘pot luck,’ which was corned beef, salt pork and vegetables, all boiled together in the same big iron pot hanging from the crane, which was supplied with iron hooks and trammels and swung in and out of the huge fire-place. In the same pot with the salt pork, potatoes, turnips, parsnips, beets, carrots, cabbage, and sometimes onions, was placed an Indian pudding, consisting of plain Indian meal mixed in water, pretty thick, salted and poured into a home-made brown linen bag which was tied at the top. When dinner was ready the Indian pudding was *first* taken from the pot, slipped out of the bag, and eaten with molasses. Then followed the ‘pot-luck.’ I confess I like to this day the old-fashioned ‘boiled dinner,’ but doubt whether I should relish a sweetened



dessert before my meat. Rows of sausages, called 'links,' hung in the garret, were dried and lasted all winter.

"I remember them well, and the treat it was when a boy, to have one of these links to take to school to eat. At noon we children would gather about the great fire-place, and having cut a long stick would push the sharpened end through the link, giving it a sort of cat-tail appearance. The link we would hold in the fire until it was cooked, and would then devour it with a keen relish.

"There were but few waggons or carriages in Bethel when I was a boy. Our grists of grain were taken to the mill in bags on horseback, and the women rode to church on Sundays and around the country on week-days on horseback, usually on a cushion, called a pillion, fastened behind the saddle, the husband, father, brother or lover riding in front on the saddle. The country doctor visited his patients on horseback, carrying his saddle-bags containing calomel, jalap, Epsom salts, lancet and a turnkey, those being the principal aids in relieving the sick. Nearly every person, sick or well, was bled every spring.

"Teeth were pulled with a turnkey, and a dreadful instrument it was in looks, and terrible in execution. I can remember that once I had a convenient toothache. Like many other boys, I had occasions when school was distasteful to me, and the hunting for birch or berries, or going after fish, were more of a delight than the struggle after knowledge. This toothache struck in on a Monday morning in ample time to cover the school hour. I was in great pain, and held on to my jaw with a severe grip. My mother's sympathetic nature permitted me to stay at home with the pain. My father was of rather sterner stuff. He didn't discover I was out of school until the second day. When he found out I had the toothache, he wanted to see the tooth. I pointed out one, and he examined it carefully. He said it was a perfectly sound tooth, but he didn't doubt but it pained very much and must be dreadful to bear, but he would have something done for it. He gave me a note to Dr. Tyle Taylor. Dr. Tyle read the note, looked at the tooth, and then, getting down the dreadful turnkey, growled: "Sit down there, and I'll have that tooth



out of there, or I'll yank your young head off." I did not wait for the remedy, but left for home at the top of my speed—and have not had the toothache since.

"I remember seeing my father and our neighbours put through military drill every day by Captain Noah Ferry in 1814, for the war with Great Britain of 1812-15.

"My uncles, aunts and others, when I was a child, often spoke about ravages of Indians from which their ancestors had suffered, and numbers of them remembered and described the burning of Danbury by the British in 1777.

"One season I attended the private school of Laurens P. Hickok (now Prof. Hickok), in which his sweetheart, Eliza Taylor, was also a scholar. One day he threw a ruler at my head. I dodged, and it struck Eliza in the face. He quietly apologised, and said she might apply that to some other time when she might deserve it. He and his wife are still living in Andover, Mass., a happy grey-haired old couple of eighty or more.

"Eliza's father, Esquire Tom Taylor, sometimes wore white-topped boots. He was a large majestic-looking man, of great will-force, and was considered the richest man in Bethel. Mr. Eli Judd was marked second in point of wealth. Every year I took twelve dollars to Esquire Tom Taylor to pay the interest on a two hundred dollar note which my father owed him. I also annually carried four dollars and fifty cents to Eli Judd for interest on a seventy-five dollar note which he held against my father. As these wealthy men quietly turned over each note filed away in a small package till they found the note of my father, and then endorsed the interest thereon, I trembled with awe to think I stood in the presence of such wonderfully rich men. It was estimated that the richer of them was actually worth three thousand dollars!

"Esquire Tom made quite a revolution here by one act. He got two yards of figured carpet to put down in front of his bed in the winter, because the bare board floor was too cold for his feet, while he was dressing. This was a big event in the social life of that day, and Esquire Tom was thought to be putting on airs which his great wealth alone permitted.



“When I was but ten years old, newspapers came only once a week. The man who brought us the week’s papers came up from Norwalk, and walked through this section with newspapers for subscribers and pins and needles for customers. He was called Uncle Silliman. I can remember well his weekly visit through Bethel, and his queer cry. On coming to a house or village he would shout ‘News! News! The Lord reigns!’ One time he passed our school-house when a snow storm was prevailing. He shouted: ‘News! News! The Lord reigns—and snows a little.’

“It took two days, and sometimes more, to reach New York from Bethel or Danbury. My father drove a freight or market waggon from Bethel to Norwalk. Stage passengers for New York took sloop at Norwalk, sometimes arriving in New York the next morning, but were often detained by adverse winds several days.

“Everybody had barrels of cider in their cellars and drank cider—spirits called ‘gumption.’ Professors of religion and the clergy all drank liquor. They drank it in all the hat and comb shops, the farmers had it at hay and harvest times. Every sort of excuse was made for being treated. A new journeyman must give a pint or quart of rum to pay his footing. If a man had a new coat he must ‘sponge’ it by treating. Even at funerals the clergy, mourners and friends drank liquor. At public vendues the auctioneer held a bottle of liquor in his hand, and when bidding lagged he would cry ‘a dram to the next bidder,’ the bid would be raised a cent, and the bidder would take his dram boldly and be the envy of most of the others.

“The public whipping-post and imprisonment for debt both flourished in Bethel in my youthful days. Suicides were buried at cross-roads. How blessed are we to live in a more charitable and enlightened age, to enjoy the comforts and conveniences of modern times, and to realise that the world is continually growing wiser and better.

“I sincerely congratulate my native village on her character for temperance, industry, and other good qualities.

“And now, my friends, I take very great pleasure in presenting this fountain to the town and borough of Bethel as a



small evidence of the love which I bear them and the respect which I feel for my successors, the present and future citizens of my native village."

Our Great Barnum-London Show closed its season at Newport, Arkansas, November 12, 1881, from whence it came direct to its Winter Quarters, at Bridgeport, arriving on the morning of November nineteenth. The entire show travelled, during the season of thirty-three weeks, 12,266 miles. Bay City, Michigan, was the furthest point north which the Show visited. Bangor, Maine, the furthest east; Galveston, Texas, the furthest south, and Omaha, Nebraska, the furthest west.

In the autumn of 1881 I made a formal proposition to the Common Council of Bridgeport to present to that city the boulevard and dyke. My offer was unanimously accepted, and a vote of thanks passed, in which it was declared that the water front thus presented should be designated as "The Barnum Boulevard."

In consequence of the great success which, as I so confidently anticipated, has attended our great combination, in the autumn of 1881, I matured plans for the travelling season of 1882, when the Barnum-London Museum, Menageric, Hippodrome and Circus again delighted the amusement-seeking public, whom it has so long been my greatest pleasure to serve. The numbers which crowd to the show this summer (1882), are greater than ever. In proof of which, I may be allowed to reproduce the following paragraph:

"P. T. BARNUM'S RECORD.

"At the request of Mr. Barnum, we publish the following letter, which explains itself:

"EDITOR OF THE 'CLIPPER.'—Sir,—As a matter of record for future reference, I wish to register in your columns the absolute fact that the receipts of the Barnum-London Show in Philadelphia in six days (April 24, to 29, 1882, inclusive) were Sixty-nine thousand one hundred and fifteen dollars and eighty-five cents (\$69,115.85!), and many thousands were turned away for want of room. On Friday, May 28, our receipts were \$14,443.20. Three of the days were rainy. A tent-show puffed and advertised to an unusual extent (its proprietor appealing for support on the ground that he lived in Philadelphia and would give all his profits to Philadelphia public charities) exhibited in that city the whole of the week previous. No



such sum has ever before been taken by any exhibition in the United States, except the Centennial World's Fair. Let your readers in the great future see how many generations will pass before any travelling tent-show will receive or deserve such a testimony of unequalled merit as that owned by Barnum, Bailey & Hutchinson. Probably we shall beat our own record the present season, and frequently in years to come; but this requires hard work, clear brains, large experience, ample means, and almost reckless expenditure. It is a great satisfaction to reflect that our show gives pleasure and instruction to such multitudes of old and young, and that its strict morality and refinement in every department secure the patronage and approbation of the religious and cultured classes.

"*Waldemere, Bridgeport, Ct., May 22, 1882.*" "P. T. BARNUM.

In December of each year, I despatch my manager and agents to Europe to discover fresh attractions "without regard to expense," and to bring home for my next season the many novelties which my European agents have secured during the preceding twelve months. My hunters, trappers and agents in India, Africa and Australia are continually capturing rare wild beasts, and in every part of the civilised globe where some startling curiosity or marvellous performer is seen, the question at once is, "Where is Barnum?" The news reaches me at an early date, and if the attraction described is found worthy of a place where none but THE VERY BEST is exhibited, it is secured.

This is decidedly an age of progress. Every person must continually make improvements in his business and his manner of conducting it, or he will inevitably be left behind in the race. I have never felt inclined to give an inferior exhibition, and as a matter of mere policy, if I had no higher motive, I know I cannot *afford* to exhibit anything except *the very best*, without a moment's consideration of its cost. When the great Daniel Webster was asked by the student who was about to graduate, whether the profession of law was full, he replied:

"The lower story is crowded, but there is always plenty of room *up-stairs*!"

On this principle I always conduct my business. Consequently each season my "Greatest Show on Earth" grows larger and larger, and better and better.

On February 2, 1882, "Queen," one of my twenty-two



elephants gave birth to a young one at our "winter-quarters" in Bridgeport. The event had long been anticipated and thoroughly published throughout America and Europe. Scientists, all over the country, had been informed that the period of gestation being known to be about twenty months, a "Baby Elephant" might be expected early in February. The public press, naturalists, college professors and agents of zoological gardens in Europe were on the *qui vive*, and when the interesting event was imminent it was telegraphed through the associated press to all parts of the United States, and about sixty scientists, medical men and reporters arrived in time to be present at the birth. The next morning more than fifty columns of details of the birth, weight and name of the Baby Elephant appeared in the American papers, and notices cabled to London and Paris appeared in the morning papers. As this was the second elephant ever born in captivity, either in America or Europe, it created a great sensation. Its weight was only one hundred and forty-five pounds at birth. We named it "Bridgeport," after the place of its nativity and of my residence.

We opened our Great Show for the season of 1882 on Monday, March 13th, in Madison Square Garden, New York City, having given an illuminated street pageant the preceding Saturday evening, which eclipsed all similar exhibitions ever witnessed in America. The fame of the "Baby Elephant," and our vastly enlarged and improved Great Show for 1882, had created quite a *furor* in the public mind, and from the very first night of opening, our efforts were crowned with success totally unprecedented in the show business. Day after day, and night after night, we turned away multitudes for want of room. Our daily expenses, rain or shine, for the entire travelling season, are estimated at \$4,800, or \$28,800 per week. Our receipts averaged \$9,166 each day, or \$55,000 per week. The following extract from the New York *Evening Telegram* of March 28, 1882, gives the opinion of the public and the press in regard to this marvellous combination of the world's wonders:

"BARNUM AND LONDON CIRCUS.—The exhibition presented to the people of this city this year by the combined Barnum and London



Shows is of such a wonderful and marvellous character that no surprise is created by the number of persons attending the daily performance. Madison Square Garden, the largest building in this country, is really too small to hold the multitude seeking admission, and as a consequence thousands are turned away from the doors unable to gain admission. This state of affairs is despite the fact that 8,700 seats are provided. The receipts the first week were \$55,220, those of the second \$51,700—a total in twelve days of \$107,000. No firm in the world understands how to cater to the public better than Messrs. Barnum, Bailey and Hutchinson, and there are none who either will expend the money or devote the time necessary to procuring the attractions. "The best of everything is not good enough for the public," is the motto of the Barnum and London Shows, and they invariably have the best that money can procure, hence they are enormously patronised by the public. In the two menageries—one of which is composed entirely of trained animals, the other of exceedingly rare wild animals—more natural history can be learned in an hour than in a month from books, and the Great Museum of living curiosities comprises the most curious specimens of humanity. As for the Circus, which is given in three rings, there can no longer be a doubt as to its being the greatest the world ever saw. The specialists alone are great, while the vast number of leapers, tumblers, riders, jugglers, &c., are simply marvellous.

"Jumbo," the largest elephant ever seen, either wild or in captivity, had been for many years one of the chief attractions of the Royal Zoological Gardens, London. I had often looked wistfully on Jumbo, but with no hope of ever getting possession of him, as I knew him to be a great favourite of Queen Victoria, whose children and grandchildren are among the tens of thousands of British juveniles whom Jumbo has carried on his back. (Many years ago Tom Thumb and myself perambulated the Gardens in the same Oriental fashion.) I did not suppose he would ever be sold. But one of my agents, who made the tour of Europe in the summer and autumn of 1881, in search of novelties for our big show, was so struck with the extraordinary size of the majestic Jumbo that he ventured to ask my friend, Mr. Bartlett, Superintendent of the Zoological Gardens, if he would sell Jumbo. The presumption of my agent startled Mr. Bartlett, and at first he replied rather sarcastically in the negative, but my agent pushed the question and said, "Mr. Barnum would pay a round price for him." Further conversation led my agent to think that possibly an offer of 10,000 might be entertained.



He cabled me to that effect, to which I replied: "I will give ten thousand dollars for Jumbo, but the Zoo will never sell him." Two days afterwards my agent cabled me that my offer of \$10,000 for Jumbo was accepted, I to take him in the Garden as he stood. The next day I despatched Mr. Davis by steamer to London, with a bank draft for £2,000 sterling, payable to the order of the Treasurer of the Royal Zoological Gardens, London. From that time an excitement prevailed and increased throughout Great Britain which, for a cause so comparatively trivial, has never had a parallel in any civilized country. The Council and Directors of the Royal Zoo were denounced in strong terms for having sold Jumbo to the famous Yankee showman, Barnum. The newspapers, from the London *Times* down, daily thundered anathemas against the sale, and their columns teemed with communications from statesmen, noblemen and persons of distinction, advising that the bargain should be broken at all risk, and promising that the money would be contributed by the British public to pay any damages which might be awarded to Barnum by the courts. It is said that the Queen and the Prince of Wales both asked that this course should be adopted. I received scores of letters from ladies and children, beseeching me to let Jumbo remain, and to name what damages I required and they should be paid. Mr. Laird, the shipbuilder, wrote me from Birkenhead that England was as able to pay "Jumbo claims" as she was to pay the "Alabama claims," and it would be done if I would only desist and name my terms. All England seemed to run mad about Jumbo; pictures of Jumbo, the life of Jumbo, a pamphlet headed "Jumbo-Barnum," and all sorts of Jumbo stories and poetry, Jumbo Hats, Jumbo Collars, Jumbo Cigars, Jumbo Neckties, Jumbo Fans, Jumbo Polkas, &c., were sold by the tens of thousands in the stores and streets of London and other British cities. Meanwhile, the London correspondents of the leading American newspapers cabled columns upon the subject, describing the sentimental Jumbo craze which had seized upon Great Britain. These facts stirred up the excitement in the United States, and the American newspapers, and scores of letters sent to me daily, urged me not to give up Jumbo.



The editor of the London *Daily Telegraph* cabled me to name a price for which I would cancel the sale, and permit Jumbo to remain in London :—

P. T. Barnum, N. Y.:

London, February 22.

Editor's compliments ; all British children distressed at elephant's departure ; hundreds of correspondents beg us to inquire on what terms you will kindly return Jumbo. Answer, prepaid, unlimited.

LESARGE, *Daily Telegraph*.

I cabled back as follows :—

New York, February 23, 1882.

To Lesarge, *Daily Telegraph*, London :

My compliments to Editor *Daily Telegraph* and British Nation. Fifty-one millions of American citizens anxiously awaiting Jumbo's arrival. My forty years' invariable practice of exhibiting the best that money could procure, makes Jumbo's presence here imperative. £100,000 would be no inducement to cancel purchase. My largest tent seats 30,000 persons, and is filled twice each day. It contains four rings, in three of which three full circus companies give different performances simultaneously.

In the large outer ring, or racing track, the Roman Hippodrome is exhibited. In two other immense connecting tents my colossal Zoological collection and museum are shown \* \* \*

Wishing long life and prosperity to British Nation and *Telegraph* and Jumbo, I am the public's obedient servant,

P. T. BARNUM.

This despatch was published in the London *Daily Telegraph* the next morning, and was sent by the London associated press to the principal newspapers throughout Great Britain, which republished it the following day, giving the excitement an immense impetus. Crowds of men, women and children rushed to the "Zoo" to see dear old Jumbo for the last time, and the receipts at the gates were augmented nearly 2,000 dollars per day. A "fellow" or stockholder of the Royal Zoo sued out an injunction in the Chancery Court against the "councillors" of the Zoo and myself to quash the sale. After a hearing, which occupied two days, the sale was declared valid, and Jumbo was decided to be my property. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals threatened my agent with imprisonment if he used force to induce Jumbo to enter a huge iron-bound cage, which had been constructed and placed on wheels to draw Jumbo at night eight miles to the steamship *Assyrian Monarch*, which was to bring him to New York.



Jumbo came up in Parliament, where the President of the Board of Trade was questioned in regard to precautions being taken to protect the passengers on shipboard. Mr. Lowell, our American Minister to the Court of St. James, in a speech given at a public banquet in London, playfully remarked, "the only burning question between England and America is Jumbo." The *London Graphic*, *Illustrated News*, *Punch*, and all the London papers published scores of pictures and descriptions of Jumbo, in prose and poetry, for several weeks in succession.

Finally, after more than a month's delay, when it was seen that nothing could induce me to cancel my purchase, and that Jumbo was pretty sure to leave London on Saturday, March 25th, my agent was offered £10,000 if he would let Jumbo remain in his old quarters. This, of course, could not be done, for I had expended many thousand dollars in engravings, cuts, lithographs and advertisements, promising the public that the citizens of the United States should see Jumbo, "the largest quadruped at present known on the face of the earth." The Royal Zoological Gardens, besides receiving £2,000 from me, probably cleared an extra £15,000, or more, by showing *my animal* after I had paid for him—all on account of this most remarkable excitement throughout Great Britain.

After much trouble in dragging the huge monster to the London docks, he was shipped by my agent, James R. Davis, in charge of his old keeper, Matthew Scott, and our agent, William Newman (known as Elephant Bill), and other attendants, and set sail in the *Assyrian Monarch* on March 25th.

After a rough passage he arrived in New York, in good condition, Sunday morning, April 9th. On landing him, Sunday evening, at Pier 1, North River, his cage was placed on its original wheels, and drawn up Broadway by sixteen heavy draught horses, assisted by our two largest elephants. On Monday, April 10, 1882, Jumbo was placed on exhibition in the Menagerie Department of our Great Show, where he created an immense sensation, and augmented our receipts during two weeks to such an extent as to considerably more



than repay us for his purchase and subsequent expenses, amounting in all to nearly 30,000 dollars.

I may here state that at the present time I am President of the Bridgeport Water Company, which supplies that city with all its water ; also, President of the Bridgeport Hospital, and one of the Bridgeport City Park Directors.

As I close this volume, I am more thankful than words can express, that my health is preserved, and that I am blessed with a vigour and buoyancy of spirits vouchsafed to but few ; but I am by no means insensible to the fact that I have reached the evening of life (which is well lighted, however), and I am glad to know that though this is indeed a beautiful, delightful world to those who have the temperament, the resolution and the judgment to make it so, yet it happily is not our “abiding-place,” and he is unwise who sets his heart so firmly upon its transitory pleasures as to feel a reluctance to obey the call, when his Father makes it, to leave all behind and to come higher up in the great Future where all of that which we now prize highly (except our love to God and our affection for humanity), shall dwindle into insignificance.

SOUTHPORT, LANCASHIRE, ENGLAND, *July* 15, 1882.



## POSTSCRIPT.

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KNOWING the advantage to health of a sea voyage, and of giving the brain a rest, I sailed for England in the *City of Rome*, May 27th, 1882. My wife accompanied me. We spent most of our time at Southport, Lancashire, the home of Mrs. Barnum's parents. We are booked to return in the same steamship, July 20th. During my short stay in England I have visited London twice. I was present at the dinner given by Mr. Henry Irving, the eminent actor, on the stage of his Lyceum Theatre, June 25th. About seventy gentlemen of note were present, including Lord Lytton, the Lord Mayor, Sir Julius Benedict (the conductor of my Jenny Lind concerts), Dion Boucicault, &c., &c. I also attended, by special invitation, a grand Military Tournament at the Agricultural Hall, at which the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duke of Cambridge, and other members of the Royal Family were present. My seat was located within a few feet of the Royal box. During the entertainment some sixty of the Royal Life Guards, mounted on their jet-black steeds, gave what is called the "Musical Ride," consisting of an ingenious and exciting series of marches, counter-marches, evolutions, and figures, not unlike those presented in the "grand entrées" of my circus rings. The large area of the Agricultural Hall gave space for elaboration. When I was pointed out to the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge, they rose and gave me a good stare, and then smilingly conversed. I fancy that, remembering my success in securing "Jumbo," these royal personages were wondering whether I contemplated coming down with a swoop and carrying the Royal Life Guards off to America! While in England I received



cable messages from my show managers almost daily, showing the enormous and increasing success of the "Greatest Show on Earth." From these "cables," and subsequent letters, which came by every steamer, I learned the following absolute facts. The receipts of our great show in Boston in six days, *viz.*, from June 12th to June 17th, 1882, inclusive, were \$74,051.00, nearly £15,000. The receipts in a single day, the 17th, were \$15,742.15, or £3,148. The amount taken during our ten days' exhibition in Boston exceeded \$108,000, or £21,600 sterling. Our prices of admission to the entire show combination, are the same as those of ordinary travelling tent shows in the United States, *viz.*, 50 cents, children half price, an extra charge being made for reserved seats. Subsequent "cable" notices inform me that the average daily receipts of the show at the towns which it visited after leaving Boston are about equal in amount to those of that city.



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| 213 The Bramleighs.                | 30 Davenport Dunn.              |
| 225 Tony Butler.                   | 33 Roland Cashel.               |
|                                    | 42 Martins of Cro' Martin.      |

**By HARRISON AINSWORTH.**

- 335 Cardinal Pole.  
342 Constable of the Tower.  
368 Leaguer of Lathom.  
369 Spanish Match.  
370 Constable de Bourbon.  
371 Old Court.  
373 Myddleton Pomfret  
374 Hilary St. Ives.  
419 Lord Mayor of London.  
420 John Law.

**By E. P. ROE.**

- 448 Opening of a Chestnut Burr.  
449 A Face Illumined.  
450 Barriers Burned Away.  
451 What Can She Do?  
452 A Day of Fate.  
453 Without a Home.  
523 A Knight of the 19th Century.  
524 Near to Nature's Heart.  
526 From Jest to Earnest.

**By WHYTE MELVILLE.**

- |                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 387 Tilbury Nogo.          | 397 Satanelia.            |
| 388 Uncle John.            | 398 Katerfelto.           |
| 389 The White Rose         | 399 Sister Louise.        |
| 390 Cerise.                | 400 Rosine.               |
| 391 Brookes of Bridlemere. | 401 Roy's Wife.           |
| 392 "Bones and I."         | 402 Black, but Comely.    |
| 393 "M. or N."             | 410 Riding Recollections. |
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| 396 Sarchedon.             |                           |



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|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
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| 117 Flying Scud.                     | 157 Lord Falconberg's Heir. |
| 128 Crumbs from a Sportsman's Table. | 168 The Beauclercs.         |
|                                      | 207 Box for the Season.     |

**By HENRY KINGSLEY**

- 195 Geoffry Hamlyn.  
196 Ravenshoe.  
197 Hillyars and Burtons.  
198 Silcote of Silcotes.  
199 Leighton Court.  
200 Austin Elliot.  
201 Reginald Hetherege.

**By ANNIE THOMAS.**

- 114 Theo Leigh.  
234 A Passion in Tatters.  
268 He Cometh Not, She Said.  
274 No Alternative.  
338 Blotted Out.  
376 A Laggard in Love.  
412 High Stakes.

**By HAWLEY SMART**

- |                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 321 Broken Bonds. | 367 Race for a Wife.    |
| 324 Two Kisses.   | 375 Play or Pay.        |
| 328 False Cards.  | 382 Sunshine and Snow.  |
| 359 Courtship.    | 418 Belles and Ringers. |
| 361 Bound to Win. | 423 Social Sinners.     |
| 364 Cecile.       | The Great Tontine.      |

**By JANE AUSTEN.**

- 163 Sense and Sensibility.  
164 Emma.  
165 Mansfield Park.  
166 Nor. hanger Abbey.  
167 Pride and Prejudice.

**By VICTOR HUGO.**

- 425 Jean Valjean (Les Misérables).  
426 Cosette and Marius (Les Misérables).  
427 Fantine (Les Misérables).  
428 By the King's Command.

**By Mrs. OLIPHANT**

- |                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 271 May.                   | 317 Harry Muir.        |
| 276 For Love and Life.     | 323 Heart and Cross.   |
| 277 Last of the Mortimers. | 333 Magdalene Hepburn. |
| 280 Squire Arden.          | 334 House on the Moor. |
| 285 Ombra.                 | 336 Lilliesleaf.       |
| 296 Madonna Mary.          | 377 Lucy Crofton.      |
| 316 Days of My Life.       |                        |

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- |                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
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| 11  | <b>The Half-Sisters.</b>          | G. JEWSEBURY.      | 154 | <b>Riverston.</b>                  | Mrs. G. M. CRAIK.                         |
| 12  | <b>Bachelor of the Albany.</b>    | M. W. SAVAGE.      | 159 | <b>Secret Dispatch.</b>            | JAMES GRANT.                              |
| 40  | <b>Belle of the Village.</b>      | J. MILLS.          | 185 | <b>The Brothers.</b>               | ANNA H. DRURY.                            |
| 41  | <b>Charles Auchester.</b>         |                    | 204 | <b>Semi-Attached Couple.</b>       | Lady EDEN.                                |
|     | Author of "My First Season."      |                    | 205 | <b>Semi-Detached House.</b>        | Do.                                       |
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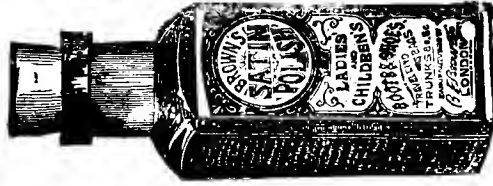
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